THE
NĀRADA-PURĀṆA

PART IV

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SECTION IV[1]

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

The Brahmapurāna : Contents and merit accrued

Sūta said :

1. On hearing these words of Sanatkumāra joyously, the delighted Nārada who was desirous of knowing the excellent thing that is conducive to welfare, said again.

Nārada said :

2. Well done, O blessed one, Well done. The great sacred (Tantra) text, that is the most excellent among the (Tāntric) scriptural texts has been narrated by you. It renders great benefit to all the worlds.

3. Now I wish to hear the excellent narration of Purāṇas. O sage, tell me whatever (i.e. all legendary episodes) is narrated in each of the different Purāṇas, since you are considered to be omniscient.

Sūta said :

4. O Brāhmaṇa, on hearing those auspicious words of Nārada, his enquiry regarding the stories in the Purāṇas, Sanatkumāra replied.

1 This section is historically very important as it records the detailed contents of each *Mahāpurāṇa* as they stood before the final redaction of the present NP. As the notes below will show, the NP does *not* cover *all* the contents of *all* the Purāṇas and the information regarding interlocutors etc, is at variance with the published editions of these *Purāṇas*. But that does not mean that whatever is not recorded in the NP. is spurious. Critical editions based on all-India Mss. of the Purāṇas will be more reliable in this matter.

Sanatkumāra said :

5. O Brāhmaṇa, the stories extant in the Purāṇas are miraculous and very detailed. They have originated in the different Kalpas[1] and they include different stories and anecdotes.

6. This sage Sanātana is the most excellent among the knowers of many Kalpas. Ask him about this. No one else knows as much as he does.

7. On hearing these words of the noble-souled Sanatkumāra, Nārada bowed to Sanātana with great humility and submitted :

Nārada said :

8-9. O Brāhmaṇa, the most excellent one among the knowers of the Purāṇas, interested in the discussion of the perfect knowledge, kindly recount to me the classification of the Purāṇas in their entirety, on hearing which everything becomes heard, on knowing which everything is known. It is by following the injunctions therein that everything meritorious is done.

10-11. The duties of the different castes and stages of life are clearly understood from it. How many are the Purāṇas ? What is the magnitude (extent) of each ? What are the stories that they contain ? O holy Lord, tell me. So also recount to me the different stories based on the four castes of people, as well as the details of the different holy observances.

12. Please reveal clearly the stories of the different races and dynasties in the order of their creation. O Holy Lord, there is no one superior to you in the knowledge of the stories contained in the Purāṇas.

13a. Hence tell me the story (i.e. the content of the Purāṇas) that dispels all doubts.

Sūta said :

13b-14a. O Brāhmaṇas, on hearing the speech (request)

1. This is a convenient plea to reconcile different versions of the same story in different *Purāṇas*.

of Nārada, Sanātana, the most excellent one among the knowers, meditated on Nārāyaṇa for a short while and said :

Sanātana said :

14b-16a. Very well ! O excellent sage, very nice ! Since your steady inclination is diverted towards the knowledge of the stories in the Purāṇas. This is conducive to the help of all the worlds. I shall tell you what had been narrated by Brahmā formerly. Urged by filial affection, he narrated to Marīci and other sages.

16b-18. Brahmā's son named Marīci is well known as one richly endowed with Vedic learning. He is the master of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas (lores ancillary to Vedas). Once he approached his father Brahmā, the creator of the worlds. O leading sage ! O bestower of honour ! He devoutly bowed to him and asked him the same question regarding the holy narrative of the Purāṇas as you do now.

Marīci said :

19. O Lord, Lord of the chiefs of the Devas, the Creator and the annihilator of the worlds, O omniscient one, O presiding deity over all, obeisance be to you, who are gracious to all.

20. O father, I am desirous of hearing. Kindly tell me the core of the Purāṇas, their definition, their authority, the narrator and the inquirer.

Brahmā said :

21. Listen, O dear child, I shall tell you the collective account of the Purāṇas. On knowing it, all the extant literature among the mobile and the immobile beings becomes known

22. O bestower of honour, in all the Kalpas, there was only one Purāṇa[1] that was the very seed of the fourfold aims of life. It extended to a hundred crores of verses.

1. With due respect to P.V. Kane (H.D. V. ii.P. 829), I believe that originally there was a single text of literature called the *Purāṇa*, on account of the following reasons :

23-24. It was from the Purāṇa that all other sacred literature and sciences were evolved. As days passed by, people, could not grasp this Purāṇa properly. On realising it, Hari the highly intelligent deity, incarnated himself as Vyāsa in every age. In the course of every Dvāpara age, he reduced it to four hundred-thousand verses.

(1) Not only the NP here but various other Purāṇas record the tradition that originally there was one *Purāṇa, vide Brahmāṇḍa* (BdP) I.1. 40-41., LP I. 2.3., Mt. P 53. 3-11, Pd. P V. 145-52, Va. P. I. 60-61. And They have a number of common verses. For example compare, NP I.92.22-25 (our text) with the following from Mt. P. 53. 4-11. :

Purāṇam ekam evāsīt tadā Kalpāntare' nagha /
Trivarga-sādhanam puṇyaṁ śata-koṭi-pravistaram //
Pravṛttiḥ sarva-śāstrāṇām Purāṇasyā' bhavat tadā /
Kālenāgrahaṇaṁ dṛṣṭvā Purāṇasya tato nṛpa //
Vyāsa-rūpam ahaṁ kṛtvā saṁharāmi yuge yuge /
Catur-lakṣa-pramāṇena Dvāpare Dvāpare sadā //
Tad aṣṭādaśadhā kṛtvā bhūr-loke'smin prakāśyate /
Adyāpi deva-lokesmin śata-koṭi-pravistaram //

(2) All Purānas conform in general to a uniform structure known as *Pañca-lakṣaṇa* or claim to have the following five characteristic topics viz., the creation of the Universe (*Sarga*) after destruction or *Pralaya* (*Pratisarga*)

(3) Genealogy of Sages and Kings (*Vaṁśa*) (4) the great periods called *Manvantaras*, (5) history of dynasties both Solar and Lunar races. etc. (*Vaṁśānucarita*)

(4) Not only verses but long passages of verses are found common to a number of Purāṇas.

Thus each Purāṇa tries to follow the proto-type of that ancient text called the Purāṇa.

(5) The *Atharva Veda* (AV. XI. 7. 24 and XV. 6. 10-11) mentions *Purāṇa* which shows that there was no proliferation of Purāṇa upto the final redaction of the AV.

It was by the time of the *Dharma-Sūtras* of Āpastamba and Gautama that Purāṇas with different names came into existence "approaching in the contents to some extent at least of some of the extant Purāṇas" (HD. V. ii. 318). Writers from the 2nd to the eighth cent A.D. from Śabara to Śaṅkara show that the Purāṇa texts before those authors exhibit the same contents and characteristics as many of the extant Purāṇas.

The later proliferation does not disprove the existence of one single work called Purāṇa.

For details, vide section 1 of the *Introduction.*

25. He divides Purāṇa into eighteen books and hands it over to the people of the Earth. Even today, original in the region of the Devas, the Purāṇa extends to a hundred crores of verses.

26-28. Of course, there is a condensed version in which the essence is described briefly in four hundred thousand verses.[1] The following are the three times six (eighteen) books viz—Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Vāyavīya, Bhāgavata, Nāradīya Mārkaṇḍeya, Āgneya, Bhaviṣya, Brahma Vaivarta, Liṅgaka, Vārāha, Skānda, Vāmana, Kūrma, Mātsya, Gāruḍa and Brahmāṇḍa.[2]

29. The single narrative is called the thread that binds the narrator and the listener. I shall recount briefly. Listen with great concentration.

30. It was the Brahma Purāṇa that was narrated at the outset[3] by the noble-souled Vyāsa, the Vedic scholar, for the benefit of the whole world.

31. Indeed, it is the foremost among all the Purāṇas. It bestows virtue, love, wealth and liberation from Saṁsāra. It is rich with various narratives and historical anecdotes. It consists of ten thousand verses.[4]

1. The total number of verses in the extant *Purāṇas* as enumerated in *Mt. P.* & *Va.P.* comes to 400600 which is approximately the same as "Four hundred thousand" as mentioned here and in other Purāṇas.

2. The list of Purāṇas given here is the same as in the Bh. P XII. 13. 4-8, VP III. 6.21.23, Mt. P. 53.11 ff Va. P. 104. 2-10, etc. But there is some difference in the serial order. For example, NP. records the *Vāyu P* as the 4th in the list, while a number of others substitute the *Śaiva* as the 4th instead of *Vāyu*. A.D. Pusalkar has however, convincingly shown that the *Vāyu* is entitled to be a Mahāpurāṇa and *Not* the Śiva Purāṇa (*Studies in the Epics & Purāṇas of India* (SEP. Ch. 2 pp. 31-41) that the VP contains this list shows that these Purāṇas existed in the Gupta Age.

3. Like the NP most *Purāṇas* give the *Brahma* the first place in their lists. But the *Vāyu* 104,3 and the *Devībhāgavata* (13.3) put the *Matsya* as the first in their list, while the *Skanda-Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa* 2. 8-9 gives that honour to the *Brahmāṇḍa*.

4. The Bh. P. XII. 13.4 agrees with the NP about the number of verses (viz 10000) in the *Brahma P* but *AP.* 272.1 credits it with 25000 verses while *Mt. P.* states 13000 as the total No. of verses therein. Actually

32. O leading sage, in it is described the origin of the Devas, *Suras and Dakṣa and other Prajāpatis.

33. Then, there is the holy narration of the race of the Sun, the Supreme Ātman, the lord of the worlds. The narrative is destructive of great sins.

34. In the course of that narrative, the incarnation of the glorious Rāmacandra[1] has been recounted, Rāmacandra of blissful form incarnating in four manifestations (vyūhas).[2]

35. Thereafter, the lunar race is described. There is the story of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the Universe, that is destructive of sins.

36. There is the description of all the continents and sub-continents without omitting anything. The description of the nether-worlds and the heavens is also seen (given therein).

37. There is the enumeration of the Narakas (hells). There is a hymn and a narrative of the Sun. Pārvatī's birth and marriage are described.

38. Then there is the narrative of Dakṣa. There is the description of the holy centre of 'Ekāmra'[3] (Bhuvaneśvara in Orissa). O Nārada, the first part of this Purāṇa has thus been narrated.

39. In its second part, there is the description of Puruṣottama.[4] It is explained in detail along with the injunctions as to how a pilgrimage (of Jagannātha Puri) is to be conducted.

the Ānandāśrama Edt. of this Purāṇa contains 13,761 verses. In the *Brahma* P, Gautamī-Māhātmya is given in 106 chapters but the NP. does not record it—a big omission.

*Probably a misprint. It should be *cāsurāṇāṁ ca* 'and of Asuras'.

1. This story of Rāma though included in the list of contents of the Brahma by the NP. is not found in the printed editions (both Ānandāśrama Poona and Gurumandal (GM) Calcutta.)

2. Obviously the *Pañcarātra* doctrine of "Four Manifestations" is implied here as Rāma is an incarnation of Viṣṇu (Vāsudeva.)

3. This is in Ch. 41 of the Bd. P. (GM. Edt). Ekāmra is Bhuvanesh-var on the river Gandhavati in Orissa—De 59.

4. The description of Puruṣottama Kṣetra and how king Indradyumna of Avanti carved out three wooden images (of Jagannātha, Balarāma and Subhadrā) is found in Chs. 44-51 of the Bd. P. This Puruṣottama Kṣetra is Puri of Jagannātha Puri or Śrī Kṣetra in Orissa. Puri is the ancient Buddhist

40. It is here itself that the story of Kṛṣṇa[1] is explained in detail. There is the description of the region of Yama and the procedure of the Śrāddhas of the Pitṛs (manes).

41. The duties of the different castes and stages of life have been described in detail. There is the narration of Viṣṇu-Dharma and the Yugas as well as the Pralaya (dissolution of the world).

42. There is the narration of the Yogas and the Sāṅkhyas. There is the description of Brahmavāda (Philosophy of the Brahman) and the eulogy of the Purāṇa.

43. Thus the Brahma Purāṇa that consists of two parts has been described. It is destructive of all sins. It bestows all happiness.

44-46a. He who, after getting copied this Purāṇa consisting of the dialogue of Sūta and Śaunaka that yields worldly pleasure (here) and release from Saṁsāra (hereafter), donates devoutly that manuscript on the full moon day in the month of Vaiśākha, to a Brāhmaṇa well-versed in Purāṇas, alongwith gold, water and a cow, after propitiating him with garments, sweet dishes and ornaments,—(such a person) stays in the region of god Brahmā as long as the sun, the moon and the stars shine.

46b-47a. He who reads or listens to this index (table of contents) to the Brahma Purāṇa, O Brāhmaṇa, shall attain the benefit of the reciter and listener of the entire Purāṇa.

Dantapura which got its name from the shrine of Buddha's left canine tooth. The three images represent Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha and there were car festivals of these when Fa Hian and Hiuen Tsiang visited this place—De, pp 162-163.

1. VV 40-42 give some of the main items in the Bd. P. such as the story of Krsṇa (Chs. 180-211), description of the region of Yama (Chs. 214-216), *Pitṛ-Śrāddha* (219-220), Varṇāśramadharma (Ch. 222), discussion of Yoga (Chs. 234, 238), Sāṅkhya (Chs. 235, 239) and eulogy of Purānas (Ch. 235). But a number of chapters on sacred places and other important episodes which find a place in every Purāṇa and as such cannot be branded as 'spurious', are not mentioned in the contents of the Bd. P. as summarised in the NP.

47b-48a. He who restricts his diet to rice soaked in ghee and subdues his sense-organs through (religious) observances and listens to the whole of Brahmapurāṇa, shall attain the region of Brahmā.

48b-c. O dear one, What more needs be said ? By reciting this Purāṇa a man obtains whatever he desires.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

The Padma Purāṇa : Contents

God Brahmā said :

1. O son, listen. I shall tell you the story of Padma Purāṇa[1] It bestows great merit on those men who joyously read and listen to it.

2. Just as a man becomes complete with his five sense organs, so also is this Purāṇa with its five sections. It is destructive of sins.

1. This Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa is regarded as the heart of the Cosmic Hari (*Pd. Svarga* 62.22). There are variations in the nomenclatures of the different Sections (Khaṇḍas) and the total number of verses in this Purāṇa. The NP. gives *Srsṭi, Bhumi, Svarga, Pātāla* and *Uttara* as the names of its *Khaṇḍas* and this is borne out by the Bengal Mss of the *Padma P--another evidence to show that the author of the NP was an East Indian.* The No. of verses is 55,000 according to the NP., Bh. P., Mt. P., VaP. but the *Brahma Vaivarta* credits it with 59000 verses. The Ānandāśrama edition (Poona) mentions six *Khaṇḍas* viz. *Ādi, Bhūmi, Brahma, Pātāla, Sṛṣṭi* and *Uttara* & contains 48,425 verses. The Guru Mandal edition (Calcutta) of the Pd. P. has seven Khaṇḍas viz. *Sṛṣṭi, Bhūmi, Svarga, Brahma, Pātāla, Uttara* and *Kriyā-yoga-sāra* and they tally with the statement of the *Pd. P. Svarga-Khaṇḍa* 1.23-25 and the no. of verses is 55000. It is noteworthy that a number of topics in the published *Padma Purāṇa* such as the characteristic of heretics (Pākhaṇḍas), condemnation of the Māyā-Vāda, stories regarding wearing special Vaiṣṇava marks like *ūrdhva-Puṇḍra*, greatness of Dvaitism, etc. do not form a part of Pd. P. as describad in the NP:

3. O Brāhmaṇa, the details of religious duties are narrated in it alongwith the accounts of various incidents, anecdotes, etc. by Pulastya to Bhīṣma with the orderly account of creation of the universe, etc.

4. The greatness of Puṣkara[1] is glorified in detail. The procedure of the Yajña of Brahman and the characteristics of the study of the Vedas (are described).

5. Various kinds of (charitable and religious) gifts and holy observances are severally glorified. The marriage of Pārvatī is mentioned. There is the long narrative of Tāraka.

6. The greatness of cows etc. that bestows all merits has been mentioned. The killing of Kālakeyas and other Daityas has been described separately.

7. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the mode of worship of the planets and the rite of Dāna (religious gift) have been laid down. All these have been mentioned by the noble-souled Vyāsa in the first part of Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa (Section on creation).

8. In the context of the worthiness of mother, father and others of being worshipped, there is the story of Śivaśarman[2] at first and then that of Suvrata.[3] Vṛtra's[4] death is described afterwards.

The special feature of the Pd P is that it was used by Kālidāsa for the plot of the *Śākuntala* and the *Raghuvaṁśa*. There is one special Tīrtha Māhātmya in the Pd. P. which is not mentioned by the NP and is ignored by complacent editors of the Pd. P. at Bombay (The Veṅkaṭeśvara Press edition) and Poona (The Ānandāśrama Edt.) and that is the *Karavīra Māhātmya* of 7300 verses MSS evidence of which is unanimous in claiming it to be a part of the Pd. P. It is being edited by the present editor in the Sk-Pkt. series of the Shivaji University Kolhapur.

1. As in the case of the Br. P. in the case of the Pd. P, the NP mentions only a few topics practically as tokens in each *Khaṇḍa* and passes to the next Purāṇa (Viz. the Viṣṇu)

Thus the greatness of Puṣkara mentioned in this verse (No. 4) forms Chs. 111-117 and god Brahmā's sacrifice is in Chs. 124-131 and the *Vrata* topic mentioned in the next verse (No. 5) is found in Chs. 200-258 of the Pd. P.

Hence non-mention of a topic in the NP. is not a proof that the particular topic in the Pd. P is spurious.

2. vide PD P. (Guru Mandal Edition) *Bhūmi* Khaṇḍa (Ch. 1.4)
3. ibid Ch. 11, 21, 22
4. ibid Ch. 25

9. There are the stories of Pṛthu, son of Vena[1] of Sunīthā[2] and of Sukalā.[3] There is Dharmākhyāna (narration of Virtue) afterwards.

10. There is the narrative of service rendered to the parents. There is the story of Nahuṣa. Yayāti's[4] story is narrated. Gurutīrtha[5] (Holy centre) is reviewed.

11. There is the dialogue between the king and Jaimini in which there is a very wonderful story. The story of Aśoka-Sundarī[6] is mentioned alongwith the death of Daitya Huṇḍa.

12. The narrative of Kāmoda[7] alongwith the death of Vihuṇḍa and the dialogue of Kuñjala[8] with Cyavana. the noble-souled (sage).

13. Then there is the narration of the Siddhas.[9] The benefit of (listening and recounting) this section is narrated. Then there is the dialogue between Sūta and Śaunaka. This is remembered as Bhūmikhaṇḍa.

14. The origin of the Cosmic Egg is narrated by Sauti to the sages. The situation of all the worlds including the Earth is described. Thereafter, the holy centres are enumerated.

15. Then there is the narration of the origin of Narmadā. The stories of various holy centres in it are severally mentioned. The holy account of the holy centres like Kurukṣetra etc. has been described.

16. The narration of the merit of the Kālindī, the description of the greatness of Kāśi and Gayā, and the merit-giving glory of Prayāga.

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1. PD Chs 27-29, Vena story is scattered upto the er of *Bhūmi-Khaṇḍa.*
2. ibid Chs 33-36.
3. ibid Chs 41-60.
4. ibid Chs 64, 72-83.
5. ibid Ch. 85.
6. ibid Chs 103-116
7. ibid Ch. 119.
8. ibid Chs 86,90,122
9. ibid. Ch 123.

The above correspondence of topics in NP. verses 8-13 in this chapter and the various chapters in the Bhūmi Khaṇḍa of the Pd. P, is enough to show the nature of the *Anukramaṇikā Varṇanam* (The description of the Index or table of contents) of the Pd. P. and NP.

17. The review of the path of activity (Karmayoga) in accordance with the castes and stages of life. The dialogue between Vyāsa and Jaimini is comprised of holy rites and stories.

18. The story of churning the ocean, thereafter, the enumeration of holy vows. The greatness of Ūrjapañcāha and the hymn that dispels all guilts.

O Brāhmaṇa, this is the section called Svarga Khaṇḍa. It is destructive of all sins.

19-21. The description of Rāma's horse sacrifice, Rāma's coronation at the outset, the arrival of Agastya and others, the narration of the family of Paulastya. The instruction regarding horse sacrifice. Then the description of rites regarding the sacrificial horse. The holy stories of many kings. The description of god Jagannātha (the Lord of the Universe) of Puri, the greatness of Vṛndāvana; it is destructive of all sins.

22. The narration of the perpetual sports of the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, the greatness of the ablution in the month of Vaiśākha, the benefit of ablution, gifts and worship.

23. The dialogue between the Earth and Divine Boar (Viṣṇu-Varāha), the story of Yama and the Brāhmaṇa, the dialogue of the messengers of the king, review of the Hymn of Kṛṣṇa.

24. The meeting of Śiva and Śambhu (?), then the story of Dadhīca, the incomparable greatness of the Bhasma, the excellent greatness of Śiva.

25. The story of the son of Devarāta, the praise of the knower of the Purāṇas, the narrative of Gautama, then the Śiva-Gītā.

26-27a. The story of Rāma in another Kalpa, the stay in the hermitage of Bhāradvāja. This is the Pātālakhaṇḍa* (The section on Pātāla). It is destructive of all the sins of those who listen and recite. It bestows all desired benefits.

*Some topics mentioned in the NP are found in the extant Pd. Purāṇa e.g. greatness of Bhasma (chs 105-108), Praise of the knower of Purāṇas (chs 114-115), The story of Gautama (ch. 114)—Vide *Pd. P. Pātāla* (G. M. edition)

27b-28. The story of Parvata originally recounted to Gaurī by Śiva; then the story of Jālaṇdhara, the narration of Śrī-Śaila etc.; thereafter, the meritorious story of Sagara is narrated.

29. The merit of Gaṅgā, Prayāga, Kāśi and the special merit of Gayā, the greatness (in efficacy) of the gift of cooked rice etc, the holy rite of Mahādvādaśī (12th Tithi of Bhādrapada (Śuddha) with Śravaṇa Nakṣatra.)

30. The greatness of twentyfour Ekādaśīs (eleventh day) in each fortnight is described severally, the narration of Viṣṇu-dharma, the thousand names of Viṣṇu.

31. The greatness of Kārttikavrata, the benefit of ablution in the month of Māgha. The greatness of the holy centres of the continent Jambūdvīpa, which destroys sins.

32. The greatness of Sābhramatī, the description of the origin of Nṛsiṁha, the narration of the story of Devaśarmā and others, the description of the greatness of Gītā.*

33. The description of devotion and the greatness of Śrīmad Bhāgavata,** the greatness of Indraprastha with the stories of many holy centres.

34. The mentioning of Mantraratna, the description of Tripādbhūti; thereafter, the holy stories of the incarnation of Matsya (fish) etc.

35-37. The hundred divine names of Rāma, O Brāhmaṇa; thereafter, its greatness is described; then the testing of the greatness of Śrī Viṣṇu by Bhṛgu. This is the holy fifth section called Uttarakhaṇḍa. The excellent man who listens to the Padma Purāṇa comprising of five Khaṇḍas attains the abode of Viṣṇu after enjoying all pleasures here that he desires. This Purāṇa contains fiftyfive thousand verses. It is called Padma Purāṇa.

38. This must be written in full and handed over to a Brāhmaṇa well versed in the Purāṇas after honouring him suitably on the full moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha along-

*Vide Pd. P. Uttara Khaṇḍa, chs. 175-192.

**Vide ibid. chs. 193-198.

with a gold lotus. He who does so is bowed to by all the Devas. He goes to the abode of Viṣṇu. He who reads this index to Padma Purāṇa or listens to it attains the merit of listening to the whole of Padmapurāṇa.

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

The Viṣṇu Purāṇa : The Table of Contents

Śri Brahmā said :

1. O dear child, listen. I shall narrate the great Purāṇa of Viṣṇu.[1] It contains twenty-three thousand verses.[2] It is destructive of all sins.

2. In the first section, six divisions have been made by the descendant of Śakti i.e. Parāśara. In the first division the introduction to the Purāṇa is made to Maitreya.

3. The primordial causal creation, the origin of the Devas and others, the narrative of the churning of the ocean, the family-race of Dakṣa and others.

4. The story of Dhruva, the anecdote of Pṛthu, the narrative of Pracetas, the story of Prahlāda.[3]

1. Probably this is the only Purāṇa which conforms to the *Pañca-lakṣaṇa* definition of a Purāṇa. May be due to its being *Pro-pañcarātra.* Rāmānuja regards it as an authoritative text. Though I have seen the Veṇkaṭeśvara Press edition and that of Gopal Narayan & Co. with the comm, *Viṣṇucitti* and Ratnagarbha's *Vaiṣṇava-kūṭa-Candrikā, I* use here the Gita Press edition (Gorakhpur Saṁvat 2026)

2. Though the NP. and some other Purāṇas such as the *Vāyu, Matsya, Bhāgavata* and *Brahma-Vaivarta* state that VP consists of 23000 verses, the printed editions give only 6000 verses.

The Gita Press edition has 6373 verses. It appears that the NP in in verses 17b-18, regards VP and *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* as one book while Śaṅkara (800 A.D.) regards them as two separate works (PJ VIII 94-96) showing thereby that the present NP. was settled before 800 A.D.

3. In this verse the NP. mentions topics discussed in VP I. 11-22

5-6. The narration of the separate rulership and administration. These are the topics in the first division.

(The second division.) The narration of the family of Priyavrata, the review of the continents and the sub-continents, the narration of the nether worlds and hells; the review of seven heavens; the narration of the day of the week like Sunday and others alongwith their separate characteristics.

7. Then the story of Bharata, which points out the path of salvation, the dialogue between Ṛbhu and Nidāgha—these are topics in the second division.[1]

8.[2] (The Third Division.[3]) The enumeration of the Manvantaras; the incarnation of Vedavyāsa; thereafter, the rite that lifts one up from hell is mentioned.

9. The review of all the religious duties (Dharmas) in the dialogue between Sagara and Aurva; then Śrāddha Kalpa (The rituals connected with Śrāddha) is recounted; the classification of the castes and stages of life.

10. The conduct of life of the good is described; then the story of delusion due to Māyā; thus the third division that destroys all sins has been explained.

11. (The Fourth Division.) The holy story of the solar race, the narration of the lunar race. Alongwith that there are stories of different kings. O excellent sage, these are the topics in the fourth division.

12-15. (The fifth division.) The query about the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa; then the story of the family of cowherds; the death of Pūtanā during his infancy; the slaying of Agha, etc. in the course of his boyhood days; killing of Kaṁsa during the youth; the story of his life in Mathurā; then in the course of his prime of youth his sports at Dvārakā, the killing of all Daityas, the different marriages, staying at Dvārakā, the Lord of the Universe, Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Masters of Yoga removed (lightened)

1. This verse refers to topics contained in VP Aṁśa II chs. 1-7, 12-16.

2. VV 8-10 mention topics described in VP *Aṁśa* II chs. 1-3, 8-9, 13-16, 17-18.

3. It appears that the NP is unaware of the chs. 21-24 which describe the future kings, in the IV Aṁśa of the VP.

the burden of the Earth through killing etc. of the enemies; the narrative of Aṣṭāvakra. The fifth division is thus recounted.[1]

16-17a. The story of Kali is mentioned, the four tvpes of dissolution. The Knowledge of Brahman reviewed by Keśidhvaja (for the benefit) of Khāṇḍikya. So the sixth division is recounted.

17b-18. Hereafter, the perpetual virtues called Viṣṇudharmottaras are mentioned by Sūta on being respectfully asked by Śaunaka and others. Many holy stories, holy rites, observances, and restraints were also described by him.

19-20. Dharma-śāstra (Code of Laws), Arthaśāstra (Political economy) Vedānta (Metaphysics), Jyotisa (Astronomy and Astrology), the narration of the races, hymns according to the context; and dynasties, Manvantaras (or Manus); different vidyās (lores) that are beneficial to the worlds are described. This is verily the Viṣṇu Purāṇa which is a succinct collection of all the topics of sacred scriptures.

21-23. In this, the events of the Vārāha Kalpa[2] have been narrated by Vyāsa.[3] He who reads this with devotion and he who listens to it with respect goes to the world of Viṣṇu. Both of them enjoy all pleasures there. This Purāṇa must be written and given to a devotee of Viṣṇu who knows the meaning of the Purāṇa on the full moon day in the month of Āṣāḍha alongwith ghee and a cow. O Brāhmaṇa, he who does so goes to the abode of Viṣṇu through an aerial chariot as refulgent as the sun.

24. O Brāhmaṇa, he who hears the contents of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa shall attain the benefit of the Purāṇa itself.

1. VV 12-15 summarize the topics in Lord Kṛṣṇa's life and form the basis for the X Skandha of the Bh. P.

2. The device to explain different versions of the same story is to attribute it to a different Kalpa.

3. In VP., Vyāsa is not the interlocutor. It is a dialogue between Parāśara and Maitreya.

It appears that the major portion of the present day VP is known to the NP and hence it obviously precedes NP in date.

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

The Vāyu Purāṇa : The table of contents

God Brahmā said :

1. O Brāhmaṇa, listen; I shall describe the Vāyavīya Purāṇa[1] on hearing which one attains the abode of Rudra,[2] the Supreme Soul

2. This Purāṇa is reputed to comprise of twentyfour thousand[3] verses. In the context of Śvetakalpa, holy rites (dharmas) have been described herein by the wind-god.

3-6. This Vāyavīya Purāṇa has two sections. (In the first section) the characteristics of creation etc. are mentioned in details. Kings and their dynasties in different Manvantaras have been recounted. The killing of the demon Gaya[4] is described in detail. The importance and glory of (different months and of) the month of Māgha in yielding (religious) merits is mentioned. The merit accruing from charitable gifts and the duties of the kings have been described in detail. The precise descrip-

1. This is called *Vāyu* as god Vāyu is the chief interlocutor. The Mt. P. (ch. 53) declares that herein Vāyu proclaimed *dharmas* pertaining to Śveta-Kalpa. This Purāṇa is published by Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Bombay, Asiatic Society Calcutta, Ānandāśram Poona and Guru Mandal Grathmālā Calcutta (to mention a few).

2. This Purāṇa belongs to the Śaiva group and is characterised by the glory of Rudra as Mt. P. puts it. The elucidation of Pāśupata Yoga and the emphasis on Śiva Māhātmya made NP declare the attainment of Rudra's abode as the fruit of listening to this Purāṇa.

3. Though Vāyu, Mt. P., Bh. P and NP declare 24000 as the total number of verses in the *Vāyu*, AP gives the 14000 as the number of verses, while according to the *Devībhāgavata* it is 24,600 verses.

Actually the Ānandāśrama edition contains 10,991 verses. It appears that sections like Revā Māhātmya and other Māhātmyas which were originally in the *Vāyu P.* when the NP wrote this chapter, later got separated as independent works (Pusalkar —*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas* (SEP).—P. 7a). Pusalkar opines that the *Vāyu* is a Mahāpurāṇa while the *Śiva Purāṇa* is an *Upa-Purāṇa* (ibid 77).

4. Kane (HD. vii p 906) and other scholars regard this Gayā Māhātmya as a later addition to counter-balance the Śaiva bias in such chapters as 20.31-35, 24.91-165 (*Sarva Stotra*), 101. 215. 33 etc.

tion of the beings wandering over the Earth, nether worlds, quarters and the firmament is made therein and all the holy vows and observances etc. are mentioned. Thus the first Section has been stated in brief.

7-9. In the latter section, there is the description of the holy river Narmadā.[1] O leading sage, Śiva's Saṁhitā (compendium) is mentioned in detail. The eternal Deity who is inscrutable to all the Devas stays perpetually on the banks of Narmadā wholeheartedly. The waters of Narmadā are identical with Brahmā, Hari, himself, the great Hara, the formless Brahman and the Kaivalya (salvation) itself.

10. Verily Revā, (this Narmadā) is a certain Śakti in the form of a river which has been brought forth from his own body by Śiva for the benefit of the worlds.

11. Those who live on its northern bank are the followers of Rudra. Those who reside on the Southern bank go to the world of Viṣṇu.

12. Beginning with Omkāreśvara and ending with the Western ocean, there are thirtyfive confluences with other rivers that destroy sins.

13. There are eleven confluences on the Northern bank (the northern side) and twentythree in the Southern bank (from the south) and the confluence of Revā with the ocean is the thirtyfifth.

14. Together on both the banks of Revā, there are four hundred famous holy centres inclusive of the confluences.

1. VV 7-15 : The Printed Texts (both Ānandāśrama and Guru Mandal (GM) editions) do not give the chapters pertaining to the Revā Māhātmya which might have been there when the NP was written. In stead of the division *Pūrvārdha* and *Uttarārdha* as given in the NP (of the Vāyu-Purāṇa) the *Vāyu* itself (in ch. 103.44) states that it has four sections (*Pādas*) viz. (1) *Prakriyā* (2) *Anuṣaṅga* (3) *Upodghāta* and (4) *Upasaṁhāra* and it calls the Purāṇa as 'Four-footed Purāṇa narrated by Vāyu' in the next verse (ibid 103.45)

The Ānandāśrama edition gives the following division of chapters : 1. Prakriyā (chs 1-6) (2) Anuṣaṅga (chs. 7-64) 3. Upodghāta (chs. 65-99) (Upasaṁhāra (chs. 100-112)

The contents given in the NP are to a great extent different from those in the Printed editions of the *Vāyu P.*

15. O leading sage, there are sixty crores and sixty thousand holy centres at every step on both the banks of the Revā.

16. This Saṁhitā (compendium) of Śiva, the great Ātman, is very meritorious. In this the story of the river Narmadā has been detailed by Vāyu.

17-18a. He who writes this Purāṇa and gives the manuscript with great devotion to a Brāhmaṇa householder on the full moon day in the month of Śrāvaṇa alongwith jaggery and a cow, lives in the world of Rudra as long as fourteen Indras rule over the Heaven.

18b-20. The man who narrates this Vāyavīya Purāṇa or listens to this, regularly, restricting his diet to cooked rice consecrated with ghee, is undoubtedly Rudra Himself. He who listens to or reads this index (or the contents of this Purāṇa) shall obtain the benefit of listening to the entire Purāṇa.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Śrīmad Bhāgavata : Contents

God Brahmā said :

1. O Marīci, listen. I shall tell you (the story of) the Purāṇa, Śrīmad Bhāgavata that has been composed by Veda-Vyāsa and which is on a par with the Vedas.

2. It consists of eighteen thousand[1] verses. It is glorified as destructive of sins. This is a veritable wish-yielding celestial tree with twelve branches (Skandhas--sections of the Bhāgavata).

3-4. O leading Brāhmaṇa therein in the first Skandha, when Sūta and the sages meet together, the Lord is mentioned

1. According to the Va. P., A.P., N.P., Br. V. & *Devībhāgavata* and the Bh. P. itself, the Bh. P. consists of 18000 verses. But actually the Gita Press edition of the Bh. P. contains 14,579 verses.

as embodying the whole of the Universe. The holy life of Vyāsa as well as that of the Pāṇḍavas (is recounted). Then the episode of Parīkṣit. This is cited as the first Skandha.

5-6. In the course of dialogue between Parīkṣit and Śuka there is the review of the two types of creation. In the course of dialogue between Brahmā and Nārada there is a nectarlike story of the Devas, the characteristics of the Purāṇa and the cause and origin of the creation. This second Skandha is thus composed by the intelligent Vyāsa.

7-8a. The anecdote of Vidura, his meeting with Maitreya : The Prakaraṇa (section) of creation from Brahman, the Supreme Soul; the Sāṅkhya doctrine propounded by Kapila : Thus the third Skandha is summarised.

8b-9. The story of Satī at the outset and that of Dhruva thereafter : There the holy story of Pṛthu as well as that of Prācīnabarhis : Thus the excellent fourth Skandha is told, while narrating the gross creation (Visarga).[1]

10-11a. The meritorious story of Priyavrata and the anecdote of the members of his family; thereafter, the description of the worlds included in the Cosmic egg. The condition of hells. This is considered (as the summary of) the fifth Skandha which is technically called Saṁsthāna or Sthiti.[2]

11b-12. The story of Ajāmila and the review of the creation by Dakṣa. The narrative of Vṛtra and thereafter, the meri-

1. The NP. upholds the view advocated by the Bh. P. II.90.1 that instead of the traditional five characteristics of a *Purāṇa*, the Bh. P. redefines a *Purāṇa* as possessing the following ten characteristics.

(1) Subtle creation (*Sarga*); (2) Gross creation (*Visarga*) (3) law and order ensured by God (*Sthāna*); (4) Protection—welfare of all (*Poṣaṇa*);(5) material lust for *Karmas* (*Ūti*) (6) the periods of Manus and history of that epoch (*Manvantara*); (7) accounts of the deeds of the Lord (*Īśānukathā*) (8) physical annihilation (*Nirodha*) (9) Liberation (*Mukti*); (10) the last resort of the Universe or the Ultimate reality (*Āśraya*).

These characteristics occur with some variations in the Bh. P. XII.7.9-10 but as Śridhara points out the terms *Vṛtti* and *Rakṣā* stand for *Sthāna* and *Poṣaṇa*. *Vaṁśānucarita* is used for *Īśānukathā*, *Saṁsthā* includes *Nirodha* and *Mukti*; and *hetu* is substituted for *Ūti*, *Apāśraya* for *Āśraya*.

2. Despite the efforts of Bopadeva in *Harilīlāmṛta* (and his able commentator Madhusūdana Sarasvati) to show how the contents of Skandha V demonstrate the characteristics of *Sthāna*, a modern reader wonders how the

torious nativity of the Maruts. This is the sixth Skandha composed by Vyāsa in the course of the section known as Paripoṣaṇa (or Protection and welfare of all by the Lord).

13. The holy story of Prahlāda, the review of the castes and stages of life. O dear one, thus the seventh Skandha is mentioned in the course of the narration of the desire for action as directed by past Karman. (It is technically called Ūti).

14-15a. In the course of the narration of the part known as Manvantara comes the narration of the elephant-king, the churning of the ocean and the check on the prosperity of Bali. The story of the incarnation as Fish. This is the eighth Skandha. (It comes under Manvantara).

15b. The narration of the Solar dynasty as well as the review of the lunar race. O highly intelligent one, the ninth Skandha is mentioned in the course of the narration of the dynasties.

16-17. The story of the childhood of Kṛṣṇa and his boyhood; his stay in the Vraja; his early youth and the stay in Mathurā; his later youth and stay in Dvārakā and the removal of the burden on the Earth. This is the tenth Skandha in the course of narrating the characteristic section called Nirodha or control.

18-19a. The dialogue between Nārada and Vasudeva, the meeting of Yadu with Dattātreya and that of Uddhava with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The mutual fight and the annihilation of the Yādavas. This is the eleventh Skandha which is designated as Mukti (liberation).

legends of Priyavrata to Bharata (chs 1 to 15) followed by the mythological geography, ancient (mythical) astronomy and description of hells form an organic whole to be included under the characteristic *Sthiti*, *Saṁsthāna* or *Vṛtti*. Such doubts naturally arise when the text of the Bh. P. is stretched on the *Daśa Lakṣaṇa* bed of Procrustes.

It appears that the NP. accepts the traditional *Skandha*-wise distribution of the topics or the ten *Purāṇa lakṣaṇas* of the Bh. P. as folows :

Name of the characteristic topic.	No. of Skandha illustrating it.
1. *Sarga*	III
2. *Visarga*	IV
3. *Saṁsthāna* or *Sthiti*	V
4. *Poṣaṇa*	VI

19b-21. The future Kali is prophesied; the liberation of Parīkṣit; the composition of the branches of the Vedas; the performance of penance by Mārkaṇḍeya. The Vibhūti (elegance, glory) of Sūra (Sun-god) and thereafter, that of the Sāttvatas. The narration of the number of verses in the Purāṇa. This is the twelfth Skandha which is also called Āśraya (support). Thus the whole of Śrīmad Bhāgavata has been narrated to you, O dear one.

22. It is the bestower of devotion, worldly pleasures and salvation on the narrator, listener, instructor, supporter and the person who renders assistance.

23. The manuscript of this book is to be given with pleasure to a Brāhmaṇa devotee of the Lord alongwith a replica of a lion in gold, on the full-moon day in the month of Bhādrapada.

24. If any one desires for the devotion of the Lord, (he must give it) after duly worshipping him (the Brāhmaṇa) with clothes, gold etc.

That person too who reads or who listens to this index, attains the excellent benefit of listening to the entire Purāṇa.

5.	*Ūti*	VII
6.	*Manvantara*	VIII
7.	*Īśānucarita*	IX
8.	*Nirodha*	X
9.	*Mukti*	XI
10.	*Āśraya*	XII

This distribution is supported by later eminent writers like Bopadeva in *Harilīlāmṛta*; Śridhara, Vīra-rāghava, Vijayadhvaja, Vallabha and others.

As I have presented this traditional scheme and criticised it in details in my Introduction to the Bh.P. pp, xxii-xxxiv (AITM series vol. VII), I may briefly state that the claim of the Bh. P. as a *Mahāpurāṇa* with ten characteristics is tolerably justifiable within the limits of the Bh. P. as an epic of growth.

This traditional presentation of the contents of the Bh. P in the NP. shows that the major portion of the BH.P. belongs to the pre-NP. era.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

The Nāradīya Purāṇa : Contents

Śri Brahmā said :

1. O Brāhmaṇa, listen, I shall recount to you the Nāradīya Purāṇa comprising the twentyfive thousand verses,[1] based on the story of Bṛhat Kalpa.

2-3a. In the first quarter of the earlier (first) division, there is a dialogue between Sūta and Śaunaka, then there is a succinct description of Creation. Many holy religious stories connected with Pravṛtti (activity) have been narrated in the first quarter of the first division by Sanaka, the great soul.

3b-4. In the second quarter called 'Mokṣa Dharma', there is the review of the means to salvation, the detailed narration of the ancillaries of the Vedas and the birth of Śuka. All these have been recounted to the noble-souled Nārada by Sanandana.

5-7a. In the third quarter, the following have been narrated to Nārada by sage Sanatkumāra : Paśu's (individual soul's) liberation from Pāśa (bondage of Saṁsāra) as explained in Mahā Tantra; the consecration of the Mantras, the initiation, the uplift of the Mantras, the mode of worship, practical application, Kavaca (recitation of mantras as protection or coat of

1. According to the *Vāyu*, *Mt. P.*, *Bh. P. A.P.*, *Br. Vaivarta* and the statement of the *NP.* here, this Purāna consists of 25000 verses. But actually the Veṅkaṭeśvar Press edition of the NP contains 18550 verses (13144 in the I part and 5406 in the II Part) PJ. VII 2, p 349 states that it consists of 17549 verses. According to Hazra, the *Mt. P.*, *AP* and *Sk. P.* had a different—an earlier—version of the NP before them, as that NP (according to these Purāṇas) was declared by Nārada with reference to *Bṛhat Kalpa* which is merely mentioned here. In the present NP., Nārada is a listener. Hence the present NP is different. Moreover, a number of *Nibandha*-writers quote from the NP but the quotations are untraceable in this extant Purāṇa. For example, the 47 lines quoted from the NP by Jimūtavāhana in *Kālaviveka* are not traced in this NP. It appears that an earlier edition of the NP was a bigger one when the mediaval Dharma-śāstra writers used it.

mail), the thousand names, the hymns to Gaṇeśa, Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Śakti in due order.

7b-9. The following topics have been recounted to Nārada by Sage Sanātana in the fourth quarter : The characteristics of the Purāṇa, the authorities and means of valid knowledge, charitable gifts, etc. have been mentioned separately alongwith the proper time for the gifts. The holy vows that destroy all sins and that have to be observed on the Pratipad (first day) and other (subsequent) Tithis in all the months such as of Caitra etc.

10. Thus the first division is summarised. It is called Bṛhadākhyāna. In the second division there is the enquiry about the vowed observance of Ekādaśī.

11-18. It is a dialogue between Vasiṣṭha and Māndhātā : It contains the meritorious story of Rukmāṅgada, the origin and activities of Mohinī, the curse on Mohinī by Vasu and then the way of extrication therefrom; the holiest story of the Gaṅgā, the narration of the pilgrimage to Gayā; the incomparable greatness of Kāśī; the description of Puruṣottama, the injunctions regarding the pilgrimage to the holy centres alongwith many incidental anecdotes; the greatness of Prayāga; thereafter, that of Kurukṣetra; the description of Haridvāra; the narration of Kāmoda; the greatness of the holy centre Badarī as well as that of Kāmākṣā; the greatness of Prabhāsa; then the description of Puskara; the story of Gautama afterwards and then the hymn called Vedapāda; the greatness of the holy centre of Gokarṇa; the narrative of Lakṣmaṇa; the narration of the greatness of Setu (the Bridge built by Rāma from Bhārata to Laṅkā) ; the description of the sacred river Narmadā; the greatness of Avanti; and that of Mathurā; the greatness of Vṛndāvana; the approach of the Paśu (individual soul) near Brahman, the story of Mohinī thereafter. These are the contents of the Nāradīya Purāṇa.[1]

1. Despite the difference noted above, the division of the NP in five parts and the contents of each mentioned therein, do tally with the contents of the extant Purāṇa.

19-21. The man who hears this with devotion or narrates it with great concentration goes to the abode of Brahmā; no hesitation or doubt need be entertained in this respect. He who gives (the manuscript of) this book to an excellent Brāhmaṇa on the Iṣupūrṇā* (on the full moon day of the 5th month viz. Śrāvaṇa) alongwith seven cows, attains salvation. He who describes this index of Nāradīya Purāṇa or listens to it with concentration attains Heaven.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa : Contents

Śri Brahmā said :

1. O sage, henceforth, I shall narrate the Purāṇa named Mārkaṇḍeya.[1] It is highly meritorious to those who read and listen to it.

2. All the Dharmas have been reviewed therein with reference to the wise birds (in the Vindhya mountains)[2]. Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa is said to contain nine thousand verses.[3]

*The correct reading should be *Iṣā Pūrṇumā*; it will mean "Full-moon day of Āśvina (September-October).

1. This *Purāna* is available in two editions—B.I. (Bibliotheca Indica series) and Veṅkaṭeśvar Press. Both the editions, however, differ in the total number of chapters (viz. 137 and 134) and number of verses in many chapters. This Purāṇa is noted for the *Devī Māhātmya* or the famous *Saptaśatī* which, though an interpolation, must have taken place long before 1000 A.D., as verses from the *Saptaśatī* are quoted in the Dadhimati Mata Inscription (in former Jodhpur state dated 289 of the Gupta era (608 A.D.) vide *Epi. Ind.* XI. 299-303. This Purāṇa is assigned a date between 400-600 A.D. (Kane HD. V : 11. 903)

2. VV 2-3. This refers to the introductory part (chs 1-7) of the Mk. P. in which Mārkaṇḍeya directs Jaimini to approach the wise birds in Vindhya mountain to get answers for his Mahābhārara problems (about the Mahābhārata story such as the reason of *Nirguṇa* Vāsudeva's assumption of human form, Balarāma's token expiation for a Brāhmaṇa-slaughter etc.) I wonder why Jaimini, a direct disciple of Vyāsa, the author of the Mbh., approached Mārkaṇḍeya for problems about the Mbh and not to Vyāsa himself. The wise birds called Dharmas explain his difficulties.

3. According to the *NP.*. *Vāyu, Matsya, Agni* and *Bh.P* the Mārkaṇḍeya P. consists of 9000 verses but the Veṅkaṭeśvar edition gives only 6447 verses

3. At the outset, the question of sage Mārkaṇḍeya to Jaimini is mentioned. Thereafter, the nativity of birds designated Dharma is recounted.

4. The story of their previous birth; the aberration of Divaspati (Lord of Heaven); the pilgrimage of Bala, the narrative of the sons of Draupadī.

5. The holy story of Hariścandra; the battle named Āḍībaka;[1] the narrative of the father and son (viz. Mahāmati and Sumati), then the story of Dattātreya.[2]

6. Then the story of Haihaya alongwith the great narrative, (the story of Kuvalayāśva ?) then the story of Madālasā is mentioned alongwith the story of Alarka.

7. The holy glorification of the creation is made in nine ways; the end of the period of Kalpa is pointed out, the review of the creation of the Yakṣas.

8. The creation by Rudra and others is mentioned; the activities in the continents have been mentioned; the stories of the Manus, diverse and destructive of sins, have been mentioned.

9. Among those stories, the story of Durgā is exceedingly meritorious, in the eighth Manvantara. Thereafter, the origin of Praṇava hailing from the brilliance of the three Vedas.

10. The narration of the nativity of Mārtaṇḍa alongwith its greatness; the race of Vaivasvata; then the story of Vatsaprī.

11. Then the holy story of the noble-souled Khanitra is mentioned; the story of Avikṣit and the glorification of

(PJ. VIII.2. (349). It is possible that when NP. was finally redacted, the stories of Rāma, Purūravas, Nahusa, Krsna etc. must have been in the then MSS of Mk. P., but they came to be deleted later and the printed editions of the Mk.P. do not include them. Hence the deficiency in the number of verses.

1. The combat fought between Āḍi (an acquatic bird) and a crane into which Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra had been transformed respectively due to curses given by them to each other due to the harsh treatment given by Viśvāmitra to King Hariścandra. God Brahmā intervened and stopped this duel.

2. Cf. Bh. P. I.3,52 where Dattātreya, the 6th incarnation of Viṣṇu explained *Ānvīkṣikī* to Alarka and Prahlāda.

"Kimiccha" Vrata[1] (the vowed observance called "What do you wish ?")

12. The story of Nariṣyanta, then the story of Ikṣvāku, thereafter, the story of Nala, and then the excellent story of Rāmacandra.

13. The narration of the line of Kuśa; the description of the lunar race; the holy story of Purūravas and the wonderful story of Nahuṣa.

14. The holy story of Yayāti, the enumeration of the scions of the family of Yadu; the story of infant Kṛṣṇa and then the story of his life at Mathurā.

15. The story of his life at Dvārakā, the stories of all incarnations. Then the description of the Sāṅkhya philosophy, the glorification of Sattva quality in the world.

16-18. Then the story of Mārkaṇḍeya; the benefit of listening to the Purāṇa. The man who listens to this Purāṇa called Mārkaṇḍeya with great devotion and respect, O dear one, attains the greatest goal. He who writes a gloss on this, attains the region of Śiva; He who writes the whole Purāṇa and gives it to an excellent Brāhmaṇa on the full moon day in the month of Kārttika alongwith the replica of an elephant in gold, attains the region of Brahmā. He who narrates or listens to this index (of topics in this Purāṇa) shall attain the benefit desired as in the case of the whole Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.

1. *Kimiccha Vrata* is given in the MkP. 122 8,17,20. *Atithi* is asked what he wants and it is supplied to him. Avikṣit, the son of Karandhama carried this *vrata* of his mother and proclaimed : "O beggars (*arthinah*), I have solemnly resolved to give you whatever you wish".

kimicchatha dadāmyeṣa kriyamāṇe Kimicchike —Mk. P, 122.20

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

The Agni Purāṇa : Contents

Śrī Brahmā said :

1. Henceforth, I shall describe to you the Agni Purāṇa. The Fire-god recounted the events of Īśāna Kalpa[1] to Vasiṣṭha.

2. It comprises fifteen thousand[2] verses of various wonderful stories. It dispels all the sins of men who listen to this.

3. At the outset is the enquiry about the Purāṇa, then the story of all incarnations, then the chapter on the Creation and then the (mode of) worship of Viṣṇu and other things.[3]

1. This Purāṇa is an encyclopaedia of the mediaeval India as stated by it : *Āgneye hi purāṇe'smin sarvā vidyāḥ pradarśitāḥ*

AP. 383.52

Although the *NP* is supported by the *Mt P.* and *Sk.P.* in connecting the events in the *AP* to *Īśāna Kalpa*, the extant AP does not mention that Kalpa or that the incidents therein belong to that Kalpa. This is quite natural, as Hazra points out that the genuine *Āgneya Purāṇa* was forced to travel to the south and came to be known as the *Vahni Purāṇa* and is awaiting publication. Hazra states that it is considerably free from the influence of Tantrism while the extant AP is a spurious *Āgneya Purāna* written under the influence of Tantrism in the 9th cent. A.D. He states that the extant *Agni Purāṇa* is different from the AP which was before the writer of the NP. The Sk. P. states that glorification of the *Agni* is the aim of the AP but that is not found in the present text of the AP. Moreover, a number of verses said to be quotations from the AP in Ballālasena's *Dānasāgara* are not traced in the present text of the AP.

Hence, it is held that the published text of the AP is different from the text available to the writer of the NP (vide Hazra : Present Agni Purāṇa" —*IHQ.*XII 683-691, '*Our Heritage*' Vol. I.ii 209. 45).

2. The NP. is supported by the Bh. P, and Br. Vaivarta in claiming 15000 verses to the AP. The AP also calls itself to be *Pañcadaśa-sāhasram* (382.64). The statements that it contains 16000 verses (*the Vāyu, Mt.P Sk.P*) shows that those Purāṇas refer to a different version The Ānandāśrama edition has 11,457 verses. But Hazra has shown that the Ānandāśrama edition is not the original *Purāna* but a late compilation. the original *Āgneya* or *Vahni* Purāṇa is unpublished (Hazra—"Discovery of genuine Āgneya Purāṇa", *Journal, Oriental Institute Baroda* V. pp.411-416.

3. VV 3-22 give the list of various topics described in the AP. As the *Vahni Purāṇa* is not available in print, nothing can be said about the contents of that genuine AP. But a comparison of the topics mentioned in these

4. Then the rites of fire worship, thereafter, the characteristics of the Mantras and Mudrās (gestures), etc., the injunctions regarding all initiations; the review of the procedure of ablutions.

5. The characteristics of Maṇḍala (mystic diagram) etc., then the rite of Mārjana (wiping off) with the water from Kuśa grass; the injunction regarding the wearing of the Pavitra (Kuśa grass with a loop and a tail worn like a ring), and then the instructions regarding the temples.

6-7. Then the worship of Śālagrāma etc., the separate signs and symbols of the Mūrtis, the injunctions regarding the Nyāsa rites, the worship of Vināyaka etc. alongwith their Pratiṣṭhā (installation), thereafter the rules regarding initiation of diverse kinds; the installation of all deities and the review of the Cosmic egg.

8. The greatness of the Gaṅgā and other holy rivers, the description of the continents and the sub-continents, the arrangement of the upper and the lower worlds, the review of Jyotiścakra (the circle of the luminaries.)

9. Jyotiṣa (Astrology and Astronomy) is then described and then the scripture "Yuddhajayārṇava" (Ocean of the conquests in battles), then the six holy rites are narrated and also the collections of Mantras and medicinal herbs to be used with Mantras.

10. The rites of worshipping Kubjikā (an unmarried girl of eight years) etc., then the six types of Nyāsa rites, then the injunction regarding "koṭihoma" (a crore of Homas), the review of the Manvantaras.

11. The pious rites of Brahmacarya (vow of celibacy) etc., then the rules regarding the rituals of Śrāddha, then Graha-yajña (the sacrifice for the planets) is mentioned, then the various holy rites laid down in the Vedas and the Smṛtis.

12. The narration of expiatory rites, the Vratas etc. to be performed on the various Tithis, days of the week and the constellations.

verses with those in the extant AP (GM;-edition) shows in majority of the topics mentioned in the NP are found in the extant AP.

13. The guidance regarding monthly Vratas, the rules regarding the charitable gifts of lamps, the worship of the Navavyūhas (the nine manifestations) and the review of hells.

14. The review of Vratas (sacred vowed observances) and charitable gifts, the direction regarding Nāḍī Cakra (circle of nerves) and the excellent rules regarding the Sandhyā prayers.

15. The stipulation regarding the meaning of the Gāyatrī, then the hymn unto the Liṅga, the specification of the Mantras for the coronation of kings; the righteous duties (and activities) of kings.

16. Then the chapter on dreams is mentioned, the review of omens, etc., the specification regarding Maṇḍala (mystic diagram) etc., then the rules regarding 'Ratna Dīkṣā'

17. The guidance in polity mentioned by Rāma, then the characteristics of Ratnas (jewels), then the science of archery is described, then the method of dealing is revealed.

18. The narrative of the conflict between the Devas and the Asuras, the review of Āyurveda (Medical Science), the Veterinary science (e. g. the treatment of elephants etc., and their pacification).

19. The treatment of cows, diagnosis and treatment of men, etc., then the different kinds of Pūjās; different kinds of Śāntis (pacificatory rites); then the science of prosody.

20. Then literature (literary criticism) and the (lexicon of) single-syllabled norms, thereafter, the enumeration of the formation of words, then lexicon according to the different groups and formations.

21. The characteristics of dissolutions; the review of the Śārīraka (limbs of the body in AP. ch. 370), description of hells, then the Yoga system of Philosophy.

22. Thereafter, the knowledge of the Brahman, the benefit of listening to the Purāṇa, O Brāhmaṇa, this is mentioned as the Agni Purāṇa.

23-25. He who writes this and gives it to a person who knows the meanings of the Purāṇa, on the full moon day in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa in accordance with the injunctions, alongwith a gold lotus and a replica of a cow in gingelly seeds,

is honoured in the heavenly world. This index of topics in the Agni Purāṇa narrated to you is the bestower of salvation unto the men who read and listen to this. It benefits them both here and hereafter.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

The Bhaviṣya Purāṇa : Contents

Śrī Brahmā said :

1. Henceforth, I shall recount to you the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa[1] which yields all Siddhis and which bestows the desired objects of all the worlds.

2. In it, I have come up as the primordial maker of all the Devas. For the purpose of creation, there was born the Svāyambhuva (son of the self-born) Manu formerly.

3. He bowed to me and asked me about Dharma (pious and religious duties) that is the means of achieving all objects.

1. This *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is not what is mentioned in the *Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra* (I.6.19.13) not the extant Veṅkaṭeśvara Edt. For the NP in the following verses (VV 4ff) mentions that Vyāsa divided this Purāṇa into five divisions viz. *Brāhma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Saura and Pratisarga.* But the published *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* has only four *Parvas* viz. *Brāhma, Madhyama, Pratisarga* and *Uttara.* NP verse 5 states that the *Bhaviṣya* P. described the incidents of the *Aghora Kalpa* which is not mentioned in the Printed Edition. The NP in V 6. states that the 1st *Parvan* (Brāhma) is a dialogue between Sūta and Śaunaka which is not found in the printed edition. *Pratisarga Parvan* in the printed editions is a fabrication as it refers to the stories of Adam and Eve, Kabir, Nanak and Caitanya etc.

Thus the account regarding the extent and contents of the *Bhaviṣya* P as given in the NP., Mt. P. 53. 30-31, AP. 272. 12 does not tally with the printed editions. The number of verses in the *Bhaviṣya* P is 14500 according to Mt. P. and Vāyu. P. but 14000 according to NP. verse 13 and Agni (272. 12) but the Printed edition is much longer (25,936 verses). PJ—VII-2, p. 349. Thus the NP describes a different version of the *Bhaviṣya P.* than the published one.

Very much delighted I expounded to him the Dharmasaṁhitā (a compendium on Dharma.)

4. When the highly intelligent Vyāsa classified the Purāṇas, the sage divided that Saṁhitā (of the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa) into five divisions.

5. The incidents of Aghora Kalpa are mentioned alongwith many wonderful stories. There the first Parvan is Brāhma where the Upakrama (beginning) is mentioned.

6. In the course of the dialogue between Sūta and Śaunaka* there is the transmission of the enquiry regarding the Purāṇa. It is full of the stories of the sun and accompanied by all narratives.

7. The entire form of the scripture is endued with the characteristics of creation etc. Thereafter, the characteristics of the calligraphy of the writers of books are mentioned.

8. The characteristic features of all Saṁskāras (purificatory rites) are mentioned here. Seven rituals regarding the Tithis of the lunar fortnight are mentioned.

9-10. The Kalpas for the remaining Tithis beginning with Aṣṭamī (eighth day) are mentioned in the section called Vaiṣṇava Parvan. In the next Parvan called Śaiva Parvan those who are different in bodies are mentioned. (?) In the Saura Parvan the final stories are mentioned. The next Parvan is called Pratisarga. It contains different stories alongwith the conclusion of the Purāṇa. It is the fifth Parvan.

11-12. Among these five, in the first Parvan, the glory of Brahmā is very much greater than that of Viṣṇu or Śiva in regard to Dharma, Kāma (love) and Mokṣa (salvation). Thus the story mentioned in the second, third and the fourth section (Varga) called Saura and in the last one named Pratisarga has been recounted.

13. The Parvan alongwith the Bhaviṣya has been proclaimed by the intelligent Vyāsa. The Purāṇa consists of fourteen thousand verses.

14. The Bhaviṣya is that Parvan (Purāṇa) where the equality among all the deities is glorified. In the point of view

*Not found in the published version of this Purāṇa

of the comparison of the Guṇas, the Śruti says that "Brahman is equal."

15-16. That a learned person who being free from jealousy writes or gets written this Purāṇa and on the full moon day of the month called 'Pauṣa' (December-January) worships duly both the reader (of this Purāṇa) and the book (the manuscript of this Purāṇa) alongwith the replica of a cow made of jaggery as well as gold, clothes, garlands and ornaments.

17. Or a person who has subdued his sense-organs, observes fasts or takes only one meal per day of sacred Haviṣya food (food worthy of being oblated in sacrificial fire), hears or glorifies (recounts) this with concentrated mind becomes absolved of terrible sins and attains to the supreme region of Brahmā.

18-19. He who reads or listens to this index to Bhaviṣya Purāṇa as mentioned here shall attain worldly pleasures and liberation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND ONE

The Brahma-Vaivarta Purāṇa : Contents

Śrī Brahmā said :

1. O dear child, I shall recount to you the tenth Purāṇa named Brahmavaivarta.[1] It points out the path of the Vedas.

1. This Purāṇa is *Brahma-Vaivarta* as the entire Brahman was manifested by Kṛṣṇa :

vivṛtaṁ Brahma kārtsnyena Kṛṣṇena yatra Śaunaka /
Brahma-Vaivartakaṁ tena pravadanti purā-vidaḥ //

—*Brahma-Vaivarta* 1.1-10

It is obviously a *Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa*—mainly devoted to the glorification of Rādhā and as such is very popular with Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇavas. According to Wilson this work does not deserve to be called a *Purāṇa* (*Viṣṇupurāṇa*, Intro. LXV—LXVII)

2. In it the Lord himself assumed the form of Sāvarṇa and narrated the subject matter of the Purāṇa to Nārada,[1] the divine sage. He mentioned the entire miraculous non-mundane subject matter to him.

3. The essence of virtue (dharma), wealth, love and liberation from bondage of saṁsāra is the pleasure in and love for Hari and Hara. In order to establish their non-difference is meant the excellent Brahmavaivarta (transformation of Brahman).

4. The events of Rathantara Kalpa narrated in details by me in the Purāṇa of hundred crores of verses were condensed and narrated by the knower of the Vedas (i.e. Vyāsa).

5. In the Purāṇa called Brahmavaivarta he condensed it into four parts. This Purāṇa is reputed to contain eighteen thousand verses.[2]

6. It consists of parts (sections) called Brahmā, Prakṛti, Gaṇeśa and Kṛṣṇa. There the Purāṇa starts with the dialogue between Sūta and Sages.

7. The first chapter (prakaraṇa) pertains to the creation; then there is a great verbal disputation between Nārada and Vedhas (god Brahmā) in which both of them met with a great defeat.

8-10a. Then the attainment of Śiva's world. The acquisition of perfect knowledge through the realisation of Śiva's Ātman through Śiva's exposition. Thereafter, O Marīci, Nārada

1. Although the NP. states that this Purāṇa is in the form of a dialogue between Lord Sāvarṇi and Nārada, in the printed edition (GM) Sauti and Śaunaka are the interlocutors in the 1st (*Brahma*) *Khaṇḍa* while Nārāyaṇa (and not Sāvarṇi) and Nārada are the interlocutors in the rest of the *khaṇḍas*.

2. This statement of NP regarding the extent of the *Brahma Vaivarta* (18000 verses) is supported by the *Vāyu*, *MT. P. AP.*, *BH.P.*, and *Brahma Vaivarta* itself.

Aṣṭādaśa-sahasraṁ ca Brahma-Vaivartam īpsitam

Br. Vai. IV. 131. 16

But in the Ānandāśrama edt. there are 20,694 verses (PJ VII 2. p. 349) and GM edt. adds an additional (spurious) *khaṇḍa—Kāśīrahasya*.

goes to the hermitage of Sāvarṇi[1] which was resorted to by Siddhas for the purpose of perfect knowledge. That is an exceedingly meritorious hermitage causing wonderment in the three worlds. This is well known as Brahma Khaṇḍa. It is destructive of sins.

10b-11. Then the dialogue between Sāvarṇi and Nārada is recounted. It contains the greatness of Kṛṣṇa and a number of various different anecdotes, the greatness of the Kalās (digits) that are parts of Prakṛti is described.

12. The mode of worship in the precise manner has been described in detail. This is the well known Prakṛti Khaṇḍa that brings about prosperity.

13. The word of enquiry about the nativity of Gaṇeśa : Pārvatī's great and meritorious Vrata (holy vow) ; the birth of Vighneśa along with Kārttikeya.

14-15a. The wonderful story of Kārttavīrya and Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma). A great dispute arises between Gaṇeśa and Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma). This is the Vighneśa Khaṇḍa that dispels all obstacles.

15b-16. The enquiry regarding the birth of Śrīkṛṣṇa : The narration of his birth in wonderful manner, his departure to Gokula (the cowherds' colony), the miracles of killing Pūtanā, etc.; his sports during infancy and boyhood of diverse kinds, are described.

17. The Rāsa sport in the autumn alongwith the cowherdesses is mentioned; his secret dalliance with Rādhā is described in detail.

18. Thereafter, Hari goes to Mathurā accompained by Akrūra. After the killing of Kaṁsa and others Kṛṣṇa is consecrated as a twice-born (i.e. investiture with the sacred thread.)

1. The Printed text of *Br. Vaivarta Brahma Khaṇḍa* Ch. 28 does not mention Sāvarṇi at all. God Śaṅkara sends Nārada to Nārāyaṇa in the *Badarīvana* and the rest of the Purāṇa is a dialogue between Nārada and Nārāyaṇa (and not Sāvarṇi though Sāvarṇi in the NP. is regarded as identical with Viṣṇu).

A detailed comparison of the contents of the printed *Br. Vaivarta Purāṇa* and those given in the NP shows that the author of the NP had a different version of this Purāṇa before him.

19. The wonderful learning of all lores from Sāndīpani of Kāśi, the killing of Yavana, thereafter the departure of Hari to Dvārakā.

20. The killing of Naraka etc, was wonderfully carried out by Kṛṣṇa. O Brāhmaṇa, this is the Kṛṣṇa Khaṇḍa that cuts at the root of worldly existence of men.

21. This is read, heard, meditated upon, worshipped and saluted. Thus is the Supramundane Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa.

22. This is narrated at the outset by Vyāsa. One who reads it and listens to it is liberated from the terrible ocean of worldly existence through the acquisition of perfect knowledge and the suppression of ignorance.

23. He who writes this out and makes a gift of it on the full moon day in the month of Māgha alongwith a cow attains Brahmaloka. He is liberated from the bondage of ignorance.

24. He too, who reads or listens to this index (contents of this Purāṇa) attains the desired benefit, thanks to Kṛṣṇa's grace.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWO

The Liṅga Purāṇa : Contents

God Brahmā said :

1. O son, listen, I shall recount to you the Purāṇa called Liṅga.[1] It bestows worldly pleasures and salvation on those who read and listen to it.

2. It was while stationed in the huge fiery column that Hara narrated (the subject matter in the Purāṇa) named Liṅga to me in order that virtue etc, may be realised. The story refers

1. The *LP* is published by the Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, G.M. Calcutta. and MLBD, Delhi. Its translation is published in the AITM, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi. I have used the GM. edition for reference here.

to the incidents of the Agni Kalpa.[1]

3. The same thing was described by the holy Lord Vyāsa in two parts. The Liṅga Purāṇa is mentioned to be miraculous with many narratives.

4. It comprises of eleven thousand verses.[2] It indicates the greatness of Hara. It is greater than all the other Purāṇas. It is the essence of the three worlds.

5. There is the enquiry at the start of the Purāṇa. The former creation is succinctly described. Then the Yoga system is narrated; thereafter, the Kalpa is recounted.

6. The origin of the Liṅga; then Ambā is glorified; then the holy dialogue between Sanatkumāra and Śilāda's son i.e. Nandin.

7. Thereafter, the story of Dādhīca, the review of the Yugadharma (virtue peculiar to the different Yugas), then the narrative of the Bhuvana Kośa (The globe of the world), then the Solar and the Lunar races are described.

8. Then the creation is described in detail; then the story of the Tripuras; the installation of the Liṅga and then the liberation of the Paśu (individual soul) from Pāśa (bondage i.e. from saṁsāra)

9. The holy rites of Śiva, the survey of good conduct Expiatory rites; Ariṣṭas (evil portents, harassments etc.); then the description of Kāśi and Śrī Śaila.

10. The narration of Andhaka; then the story of Varāha (The Divine Boar), the story of Nṛsiṁha and then the slaying of Jalandhara.

1. The NP states that the *Liṅga Purāṇa* (*LP*) refers to incidents in the *Agni Kalpa,* but LP I 2.1 states that it describes the incidents in the *Īśāna-Kalpa.*

Īśāna-Kalpa-vṛttāntam adhikṛtya mahātmanā/
Brahmaṇā kalpitam pūrvam Purāṇam Laiṅgam uttamam//

It means that the NP used a different and older version of the LP than the extant published editions.

2. This statement of the NP regarding the extent of the *LP* (viz. 11,000 verses) has been endorsed by the *Vāyu, Mt.P., Bh.P., A.P.* etc. The *LP* also states that it consists of 11000 verses ;

Asyaikādaśa-sāhasraṁ granthamānam iha dvijāḥ/

But actually the Veṅkaṭa Edt. of the LP contains 9185 verses (PJ VII—2. p. 349)

11. The thousand epithets of Śiva, the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice. Kāma is burnt down, then the story of the marriage of Girijā.

12. Then the story of Vināyaka, that of the kings and that of Śiva; then the story of Upamanyu. This is the summary of the first section.[1]

13. The narration of the greatness of Viṣṇu, then the story of Ambarīṣa, O sage, again there is the dialogue between Sanatkumāra and Nandīśa.

14. The greatness of Śiva, the mode of ablution and sacrificial system (yāga) etc. the injunction regarding the worship of the sun-god. Then the worship of Śiva that confers liberation from saṁsāra.

15. Many types of charitable gifts are mentioned; then the chapter on Śrāddha, the Pratiṣṭhā Tantra (the ritualistic text of installation), then the glorification of Aghora.

16. The great Vidyā of Vajreśvarī, then the glory of Gāyatrī, the greatness of Tryambaka, (the three-eyed Lord) as well as that of listening to the Purāṇa.

17. Thus the latter half of the Liṅga Purāṇa as composed by Vyāsa has been recounted by me and the greatness of Rudra is indicated.[2]

18-19a. This Purāṇa must be written and gifted to a Brāhmaṇa with devotion on the full moonday in the month of Phālguna alongwith gingelly seeds and a cow. He who does so, attains Sāyujya with Śiva. He does not have to suffer from old age or death.

19b-20a. The man who reads or listens to the Liṅga Purāṇa that dispels sins, enjoys pleasures in this world and at the end attains to Śiva's city.

1. Though the NP refers to a few topics in the *Pūrva Bhāga*, most of them are found in the extant editions.

2. A comparison of topics given in the NP and those found in the printed (GM) edition shows that the published LP has many topics common with the LP that was before the author of the NP.

20b-21. The man who reads the index and the man who listens to this—both of them are the devotees of Śiva. They enjoy both the worlds through the Grace of the Lord of Girijā. There is no doubt about this.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THREE

The Vārāha Purāṇa : Contents

God Brahmā said :

1. O dear one, listen. I shall recount the Vārāha Purāṇa[1]. It is comprised of two parts and it continuously indicates the greatness of Viṣṇu.

2-3. The context of the Mānasa Kalpa composed by me before, or description of the acts I did in the Mānava Kalpa before was compiled by Vyāsa, the most excellent one among scholars in this Purāṇa that comprises twenty-four thousand verses. Vyāsa is the incarnation of Viṣṇu himself on the earth. There at the outset is the auspicious dialogue between the Earth and Varāha. (Divine Boar-Viṣṇu).

1. The Purāṇa is extant in two recensions—The Northern and the Southern. The Northern recension published in the B I. (Bibliotheca Indica) series contains 217 chapters and 9654 verses (with some chapters e.g. 81-83 in prose) and *Not* 24,000 verses as stated in the NP below (verse 2) and endorsed by the *Vāyu, MT. P., Bh. P.* and while the *Agni P* (272. 16) credits it with 14000 verses. Though the NP states that the *Vārāha* P. has two parts, the published edition has one part only, though there are indications in ch. 217 that there must have been a second part as well.

This Purāna is supposed to have been narrated by Viṣṇu-Varāha to the earth-goddess. Kane observes that it is remarkable that Vyāsa does not appear in this Purāṇa though Sūta figures at the beginning of several chapters (HD V.ii, p. 904).

It is obvious that the author of the NP had a different and bigger version of the *Vārāha Purāṇa* before him.

4. In the course of the incidents of the earlier period, there is the story of Rambhā and then that of Durjaya, thereafter Śrāddha Kalpa (the rituals of the Śrāddha) is described.

5. The narration of the great penance (Mahātapas)-then the origin of Gaurī, Vināyaka, the Nāgas, the commander-in-chief (i.e. Kārttikeya) and Āditya (the sun).

6. Then there is the narrative of the Gaṇas of the goddess, of Kubera and that of Vṛṣa; then the narrative of Satyatāpasa alongwith the narration of vratas.

7. Thereafter, Agastyagītā and Rudragītā are narrated; then the glory of the destruction of demon Mahiṣa (Buffalo) brought about by the three Śaktis.

8. Then is the chapter on Parvans (religious festivals), the incidental narrative of Śveta and the charitable gift of cows. All these incidents had already been pointed out by me in the section on Bhagavad Dharma (virtuous pathway to the Lord).

9-12. Thereafter, the narration of Vratas and Tīrthas, the expiatory bodily rites for thirtytwo offences. The greatness of holy centres is mentioned separately and particularly of Mathurā, thereafter, the rules of procedure regarding Śrāddha etc., the description of the world of Yama, in the context of the son of the sage, the ultimate result of Karmans and the review of Viṣṇu's Vratas, the greatness of Gokarṇa that is destructive of sins, is mentioned. Thus the early part (i.e. the first part) of the Purāṇa is reviewed.

13-14. In the latter part, in the course of the dialogue between Pulastya and the king of Kurus, the greatness of all the holy centres is mentioned in detail, severally.

All the virtues too have been mentioned. The holy Parvan pertaining to Puṣkara is mentioned. Thus the Vārāha Purāṇa. that is destructive of sins is recounted to you.

15-17. This increases devotion to the Lord, of those who read and listen to this. He who writes out this Purāṇa and gives it to a Brāhmaṇa with devotion, along with a gold replica of Garuḍa and gingelly seeds and a cow, on the full moon day in the month of Caitra, attains the abode of Viṣṇu.

He is paid obeisance by the groups of Devas and sages. He who reads or listens to this index obtains devotion to Viṣṇu that is the cause of dissolution of worldly existence.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR

The Skanda Purāṇa : Contents

God Brahmā said :

1. O dear one, listen. I shall recount Skanda Purāṇa[1] wherein Lord Mahādeva is present in every word.

2. In the Purāṇa of a hundred crores of verses, I had described the story of Śiva. In a hundred thousand verses, the essence of those topics has been described by Vyāsa.

1. The NP states (verse 3) that the Sk. P (*Skanda Purāṇa*) consists of 81,000 verses—a view shared by the *Sk.P.* itself and by *Mt. P.* (53-41-42) *Br. Vaivarta* and *Devī Bhāgavata*. The *Vayu* and the *Bh. P.* credit it with 81,000 verses while *AP* (272. 17) and Skanda (elsewhere) state that the *Sk. P.* has 84,000 verses.

Caturaśīti—Sāhasram Skāndam Skandenitam mahat||

But the Veṅkaṭeśvar edt. contains 94,343 verses (PJ VII 2.349). According to the NP. the Sk. P. is divided in the following *Khaṇḍas—Māheśvara, Vaiṣnava, Brahma, Kāśi, Avanti, Nāgara and Prabhāsa*. One more *Khaṇḍa*—The *Sahyādri*—is separately published. But in the *Sūta Samhitā* the *Skanda* consists of 6 *Samhitās*, fifty *Khaṇḍas* and a hundred thousand verses. The names of *Samhitās* being *Sanatkumāra, Sūta, Sānkarī, Vaiṣṇavī, Brāhmī and Saura.*

The published editions—Venkaṭeśvar, Bangavasi, Naval Kishor Press (Lucknow) and Gurumandal are not unanimous in contents. Thus in part I of Avantikhaṇḍa 84 chapters of the glory of 84 *Liṅgas* (*Caturaśīti liṅga māhātmya*) are not included in the Lucknow edition, while in the II Part of the Avantikhaṇḍa, the Lucknow edition gives 110 different chapters. In other words, the Lucknow and Bombay editions differ considerably in the Avanti Khaṇḍa. The GM includes the spurious *Satya-nārāyaṇa Māhātmya* in the *Revā khaṇḍa* (pp. 1122-2235)—and that too of 4 chapters while usually we find 5 chapters of the same.

3. He has named it Skānda. There are seven khaṇḍas (parts) in it. It comprises eighty one thousand verses. It is destructive of all sins.

4. He who listens to this or reads this becomes Śiva himself. Therein all the rites and rituals regarding Maheśvara have been revealed by Ṣaṇmukha (Skanda).

5-6. These incidents which bring about all Siddhis had happened in the Tatpuruṣa Kalpa. The Māheśvara Khaṇḍa-, the first Skandha of this (Purāṇa) destroys all sins. It consists of a little less than twelve thousand verses. It is highly meritotious and contains big stories. It contains hundreds of good stories. It indicates the greatness of Skanda.

7. The following are the topics dealt with[1] in the context of the greatness of Kedāra, the Purāṇa has its starting point; thereafter the story of Dakṣa's Yajña and then the benefit of worshipping Śiva Liṅga.

Although the Veṅkaṭeśvara Edt. contains more than 12,000 verses more than the extent recorded in the NP and other Purāṇas, the Veṅkaṭeśvare edition does not include the *Mathurā* and *Māgha Māhātmyas* in the Vaiṣṇavas khaṇḍa, though the NP mentions them as a part of that *khaṇḍa*. Needless to say that the author of the NP had a different edition than those before the modern editors of the Bombay, Lucknow and Calcutta editions.

As the SK. P. is a stupendously voluminous Purāṇa a detailed analysis of all its contents is not possible here for want of space.

1. VV 7-19 mention the main topics in the Māheśvara khaṇḍa. In the GM editions it covers the following subparts, the total no. of pages of this *khaṇḍa* being 799.

Sub part.		No. of chs.	pages.
I		35	1—254
II	Kaumārikā Khaṇḍa	66	255—683
III	*Aruṇācala—Māhātmya—Pūrvārdha*	13	684—742
IV	—do—	(Uttarārdha) 24	743—799

Out of the vastness of this volume, the NP. merely mentions the topics contained in the following chapters.

Section	*Chapters*
I	1-7, 9-13, 27-31, 34
II	3, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16-33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 53, 66.
III	10-11.

8. The narration of churning the ocean, then the story of Indra, the ruler of the Devas; the narrative of Pārvatī and her subsequent marriage.

9. The birth of Kumāra (Skanda) is narrated thereafter, then the battle with Tāraka, then the narration of Paśupati, alongwith that of Caṇḍa.

10. The narration of being engaged in the game of dice, the meeting with Nārada. Then in the context of the greatness of Kumāra, the story of five Tīrthas (holy centres).

11. The anecdote of king Dharmavarman; the enumeration of rivers and oceans; thereafter, the story of Indradyumna alongwith the story of Nāḍī-jaṅgha.

12. The appearance of the Earth, the story of Damanaka, the contact between the Earth and the ocean, then the story of Lord Kumāra.

13. Then the fight with Tāraka alongwith various anecdotes, the killing of Tāraka, the installation of five Liṅgas.

14. The holy narration of the continents, the orderly arrangement of the upper worlds, the situation and magnitude of the Cosmic Egg, the story of Varkareśa.

15. The origin of Mahākāla and his extremely miraculous story, the greatness of Vāsudeva, thereafter the Koṭi Tīrtha.

16. The narration of different holy centres, Gupta Kṣetra (near the confluence of the Mahī with the sea) the holy story of the Pāṇḍavas and the achievement of great Vidyā.

17. The wonderful conclusion of pilgrimage to holy centres by Kumāra; the greatness of Aruṇācala, the conversation between Sanaka and Brahmā.

18. The description of Gaurī's penance, the review of different holy centres, the narrative of demon Mahiṣa and his wonderful death.

Actually we find that the NP touches a fringe of this part of the SkP and a great number of topics are not even mentioned.

The same is the case with other *Khaṇḍas*. One wonders whether a shorter version of the Sk. P. was used by the NP or a casual mention of a few chapters was looked upon as a table of contents in those days. Many of the topics not mentioned by the NP are found in other *Purāṇas* also and as such one should think thrice before branding them spurious.

19. The permanent residence of Śiva in Droṇācala has ever been glorified. Thus the part of Maheśvara Khaṇḍa has been recounted.

20. The second part is called the Vaiṣṇava Khaṇḍa. Listen to the stories contained in it. At the outset, the narrative of the Earth and Varāha.

21. The greatness of the mountain Veṅkaṭa, destructive of sins is mentioned therein; the holy story of Kamalā, the residence of Śrīnivāsa therein.

22. The story of Kulāla (potter), the story of Suvarṇamukharī,[1] the wonderful tale of Bhāradvāja alongwith different narratives.

23. The dialogue between Mataṅga and Añjana that is destructive of sins, the greatness of Puruṣottama[2] (Jagannātha) in Orissa thereafter.

24. The story of Mārkeṇḍeya, the tale of king Ambarīṣa and the auspicious stories of Indradyumna and Vidyāpati.

25. O Brāhmaṇa, thereafter, there are the stories of Jāimini, Nārada and Nīlakaṇṭha, then the description of Narasiṁha.

26. The story of horse-sacrifice of the king and his attainment of Brahmaloka, the procedure regarding the Ratha Yātrā (chariot procession), the rules regarding the abode of birth.

*The NP. refers to the following chapters from Sk. P. II in VV 9 1-11 chs : 3-8; 9-15, 16-32, 33, 36-40, 53, 66 (from the GM edition)

The GM text of the Sk. P. devotes the whole of III—Uttarārdha to Aruṇācala.

1. VV 22-23 refer to incidents in the *Veṅkaṭācala Māhātmya* (sub-part I of this Khanda). The story of Suvarna Mukhari covers chs. 29-35 and the dialogue between Mataṅga and Añjana, chs. 39-40. Out of the 40 chapters of this *Māhātmya*, only the above topics are mentioned.

2. *Puruṣottama Kṣetra* is Jagannātha Puri in Orissa though originally a Buddhist shrine but before the time of the NP. it was completely Brahmanised. This *Kṣetra-Māhātmya* consists of 60 chapters which are briefly mentioned here in VV 24-28. Of special interest are *Ratha-Yātrā* (the procession of Jagannātha in a chariot) chs 33, 44. The *Śayana-Utsava* chs 43-44. NP mentions a few more stories e. g. that of Indradyumna and Vidyāpati, Guṇḍiva and Vratas like *Akāmika Pūjā.*

27. The anecdote of Dakṣiṇāmūrti, the tale of Guṇḍiva, the arrangement for the maintenance of the chariot, the glorification of the Śayana-Utsava (the festival of Deity's going to sleep).

28. The story of Śveta is mentioned here; then the review of Pṛthūtsava (the great Festival), the Dolotsava (Festival of the Swing) of the lord and the observance called annual Vrata, the Akāmika Pūjā (worship without entertaining any desire in return) of Viṣṇu. Different kinds of Yoga and means thereto according to the teaching of Uddālaka.

29. The ten incarnations are enumerated; the rite of ablution etc. is glorified; then the greatness of Badarikā[1] that is destructive of sins.

30-32. The greatness of Agni and other holy centres situated in the rock of Vainateya; the cause for the residence of the Lord; the holy centre named Pañcadhārā, the situation of Meru. In the context of Kārttika, the glory of Madālasā.

33. The narrative of Dhūmrakeśa, the daily rites and duties in the month of Kārttika,[2] the description of "Pañca-Bhīṣma" Vrata that bestows worldly pleasures and salvation.

34. Then in the context of the greatness of Mārgaśīrṣa,[3] the rules of procedure regarding the bath, the glorification of Puṇḍra (the mark on the forehead) etc., the meritorious nature of wearing garlands, etc.

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1. VV 29-32 adequately deal with the III section called *Badarikāśrama Māhātmya* as most of the topics like holy centres of the rocks of Vainateya (ch. 4) Kapālamocana, Pañcadhārā (ch. 7)and Meru-Saṁsthāpana (ch. 8) are mentioned herein.

2. VV 32-33 deal with the topics in the "glory of the month of Kārttika" (*Kārttika-māsa-māhātmya*). In the original Sk. P., this section contains 36 chapters. Out of them chapters connected with the glory of religious rites in this month and the *Bhīṣma pañcaka vrata* (ch. 32) are mentioned and the story of Jalandhara ignored unless we identify "Dhūmrakeśa" (mentioned in the NP) with Jalandhara.

3. VV 34-38 deal with the section *Mārgaśīrṣa Māhātmya* which consists of 17 chapters in the original. It contains the various rites regarding bath (ch. 1), the Puṇḍra mark on the forehead (ch. 2), the details of worship (chs. 5, 7, 8, 9). The importance of Ekādaśi and rules of observing that fast (chs. 11-13, 15 & 16) and the glory of Mathurā (ch. 17).

35. The merit in the ablution with Pañcāmṛta, the benefit originating from ringing the bell etc.; the benefit of worshipping with different kinds of flowers, the benefit accruing from the Tulasī leaves.

36. The greatness of Naivedya (food offering) to God, the glorification of Harivāsara (Harī's day i.e. Ekādaśī) The Akhaṇḍaikādaśī (the unbroken Ekādaśī) as well as the merit of keeping awake during Ekādaśī.

37. The rules regarding the festival thereof, the narrative of illustrious names of God, recounting of the merit of meditation, the greatness of Mathurā, etc.

38. Thereafter, the greatness of the holy centre Mathurā is separately mentioned, then the greatness of twelve forests is mentioned.

39. In this context, the greatness of Srīmad Bhāgavata[1] is mentioned in the course of dialogue between Vajra and Śāṇḍilya, the inner sports are revealed.

40. Then the greatness of the months of Māgha[2] is reviewed in ten chapters in regard to bath, charitable gifts and Japas alongwith suitable anecdotes connected therewith.

41. Then in the context of the greatness of the devotees of Viṣṇu the benefit of Śayyādāna (charitable gift of beds) is mentioned; the rules regarding the gift of water are mentioned; then the story of Kāma.

42. The story of Śrutadeva, the wonderful anecdote of the Vyādha (hunter), the special glorification of Akṣaya Tṛtīyā[3] (the everlasting Tṛtīyā i.e. the third day of the bright half of Vaiśākha)

1. That the SkP has a *Bhāgavata Māhātmya* is less known as generally the *Bhāgavata Māhātmya* in the *Padma P.* is printed at the beginning of different editions of the Bh. P.

2. The GM edition of the Sk. P. does not give *Māgha Māhātmya* but gives *Vaiśākha Māhātmya* instead. The *Māgha Māhātmya mentioned* in the NP consisted of 10 chapters.

3. The Sk. P. gives a section of 25 chapters for *Vaiśākha Māsa Māhātmya*. But the NP mentions only one topic viz. the glorification of *Akṣaya tṛtīyā* (ch. 23 in the original Sk. P.) and ignores all other chapters.

43. In the context of the greatness of Ayodhyā[1] the two holy Tīrthas viz. Cakratīrtha and Brahmatīrtha are mentioned. These two bring about the liberation from the sin of drinking spirituous liquor; the heavenly door with a thousand supports.

44. The description of Candrahari and Dharmahari, the anecdote of Svarṇavṛṣṭi (shower of gold); the confluence of Tilodā and Sarayū.

45. The holy pool of Sītā, the lineage of Guptahari, the confluence of Sarayū and Ghargharā; the holy centres of Gopratāra, Dugdhoda and the set of five (Tīrthas) beginning with Gurukuṇḍa.

46. Thereafter, the description of thirteen Tīrthas such as Soma, Arka etc., the greatness of Gaya-kūpa (the well of Gaya) that causes all sins to recede.

47. Thereafter, the holy spots beginning with the hermitage of Māṇḍavya, that of Ajita etc., and Mānasa etc. are mentioned.

48. Thus the second Khaṇḍa called Vaiṣṇava is explained. Hereafter, O Marīci, listen to the Brahmakhaṇḍa that bestows merit.

(The summary of Brahma Khaṇḍa)

49. In the context of the greatness of Setu (Bridge built by Rāma over the sea), the benefit resulting from bath and mere sight; the penance of Gālava, the story of Rākṣasas.

50. The greatness of Cakratīrtha etc, the greatness of Vetālatīrtha which is in Devīpattana[2] (city of the Goddess), the

1. VV 43-46 mention topics described in the *Ayodhyā Māhātmya*, a section of 10 chapters in the Vaiṣṇava Khaṇḍa of the Sk. P. But one wonders why the whole section called *Śrī Vāsudeva Māhātmya* in this *Khaṇḍa* of Sk. P. is completely ignored in the NP.

The first two *khaṇḍas* viz. Māheśvara and Vaiṣṇava are compared in detail with the topics mentioned in the NP. The omissions of topics in the NP shows that the author of the NP had a different and a shorter edition of the Sk. P. when he enumerated the contents of the Sk. P. As sufficient evidence for this finding is presented above, the comparison with other *khaṇḍas* of the Sk. P. is not given here.

2. This is at a distance of 12 miles from Rāmnad (Ramnath Pur). It is also called Devipura (Sk. P. III 1. 7. 57. 63) and also Devipurī (ibid 60). Here Durgā killed the demon Mahiṣāsura.

glorification of the holy place called Pāpanāśa (the destruction of sins).

51. The greatness of Maṅgalā etc., the description of Brahmakuṇḍa etc, the greatness of Hanumatkuṇḍa, the benefit resulting from Agastyatīrtha.

52. The narrative of Rāmatīrtha etc, the review of Lakṣmītīrtha, the greatness of Śaṅkha and other Tīrthas. So also the benefit accruing from Sādhyāmṛta etc.

53-54. The greatness of Dhanuṣkoṭi etc. and that of Kṣīra-Kuṇḍa etc., the greatness of Gāyatrī and other Tīrthas is described here; the greatness of Rāmanātha; the instruction in the perfect knowledge of Reality, the recounting of rules regarding the pilgrimage to Setu which yields salvation to men.

55. Thereafter, the greatness of Dharmāraṇya[1] (forest of Dharma) is mentioned. It was here that Lord Sthāṇu instructed Skanda in Tattva (Philosophic principles).

56. The origin of Dharmāraṇya; the glorification of its merit, the narration of Karmasiddhi (achievements of the fruit of actions, the review of the family-lines of the sages.

57. The greatness of main Apsarastīrthas (Holy centres of the divine damsels) is mentioned; the review of the principles of Dharma (duties) of the castes and stages of life.

58-59. The division of heavenly spots, the auspicious story of Bakulārka, the goddesses Chatrānandā, Śāntā, Śrīmātā, Mātaṅginī and Puṇyadā are stationed herein, the greatness of Indreśvara etc., the review of Dvārakā etc.

60. The narrative of the demon Lohāsura, the review of Gaṅgākūpa, the story of Śrī Rāma, the description of Satya Mandira.

61. The narrative of the repair to the ruins; the acceptance of seats, the mentioning of different castes, the review of the holy rites in accordance with the Smṛtis.

1. De. gives four locations of Dharmāraṇya but none of them is in the South. It may appear to be a mythological forest near Rāmeśvara but the association of Brāhmaṇas of 24 *gotras* with it (Sk. P. III ii. 9-27) shows the need of its correct location.

62. Then the holy rites prescribed for Vaiṣṇavas are mentioned through different narratives, thereafter, the exposition of holy rites, observances etc., in regard to the holy Cāturmāsya (the four months of the rainy season when special Vratas are observed).

63. The eulogy of charitable gifts, thereafter the greatness of Vratas, the narration of loop-holes (causes of failures) in penance and worship.

64. The narration of making amends for them (loop-holes); the review of Śālagrāma; the means for the destruction of Bhāraka, the glory of the worship of trees.

65. The cause of Viṣṇu in regard to the state of being a tree, then Pārvatī's subsequent penance, the Tāṇḍava dance of Hara, the review of the name Rāma.

66. The fall of the Liṅga of Hara, the story of Baijavana, the story of the nativity of Pārvatī, the wonderful killing of Tāraka.

67. The narration of prosperity through the Praṇava, the activities of Tāraka, the conclusion of Dakṣa's Yajña, the mantra of Twelve syllables (viz. oṁ namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya) which is its embellishment.

68. The narration of the path of knowledge and the greatness of twelve-syllabled Mantra. The merit of Śravaṇa (the means of hearing), etc. that causes happiness to men.

69. Then in the latter half of the Brahmakhaṇḍa the wonderful greatness of Śiva is narrated, then the greatness of the five-syllabled Mantra : Namaḥ Śivāya and that of Gokarṇa.

70. The greatness of Śivarātri, the glorification of Pradoṣa Vrata,[1] the Vrata on Mondays, the anecdote of Sīmantinī.

1. This *Vrata* is to be commenced on an auspicious day in the bright half of Caitra or Mārgaśirṣa. Its details are given in ch. 18 of the *Brahmottara Khaṇḍa* of the Sk. P., Kane in HD V. I. 277 gives 6 varieties of this *Vrata*.

71. The narration of the origin of Bhadrāyu, the review of good conduct, the guidance of Śivavarman (?) and the description of Bhadrāyu's marriage.

72. The greatness of Bhadrāyu, the glorification of the greatness of Bhasma (Sacred ashes), the story of Śabara (Hunter), the Vrata called Umā-Maheśvara.

73. The greatness of the Rudrākṣa bead, the merit of the 'Rudrādhyāya' Mantra, the merit of Śravaṇa (hearing), etc. Thus the Brahmakhaṇḍa has been recounted.

74. Henceforth, the fourth part, the excellent Kāśi Khaṇḍa[1] (is summarised). The dialogue between Vindhya and Nārada is described.

75. The greatness of Satyaloka, the arrival of the Devas in the residence of Agastya, the story of a chaste lady, the praising of the pilgrimage to holy centres.

76. Then the narration of the seven cities, the review of Saṁyaminī, the attainment of the worlds of Budha (Mercury), Indra and Agni by Śivaśarman.

77. The origin of fire, the origin of Varuṇa from fire (?) the origin of the two cities Gandhavatī and Alakā and the nativity of Īśvarī.

78. The description of these worlds, viz., the moon, the sun, the mercury, the Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, my world, Viṣṇu's world of Dhruva's world (?) and the Tapoloka.

79. The meritorious story of the world of Dhruva, the survey of Satyaloka, the conversation between Skanda and Agastya, the origin of Maṇikarṇī.

80. The prowess of the Gaṅgā, the thousand names of the Gaṅgā, the praise of Vārāṇasī, the appearance of Bhairava.

81. Thereafter, the origin of Daṇḍapāṇi and Jñānavāpī (the well of Knowledge), then the narration of Kalāvatī and the exposition of good conduct.

82. The narration of a celibate, then the characteristics of women, the stipulation of what should be done and what should not be done, the description of Avimukteśa.

1. VV 74-91 summarise the main topics in the fourth *khaṇḍa* called *Kāśi khaṇḍa*. It covers the main topics found in the extant *Kāśikhaṇḍa*.

83. The duties of householders and the Yogins, then the knowledge of Kāla (Time), the holy story of Divodāsa, the description of Kāśikā.

84. The appearance on the Earth of Māyā Gaṇapati, the Universe due to Viṣṇu's Māyā, then the liberation of Divodāsa.

85. Then the origin of Pañcanada and that of Bindu Mādhava; then the enumeration of holy centres belonging to Viṣṇu, the arrival at Kāśī of the trident-bearing Lord.

86. The dialogue between Jaigīṣavya and Maheśa, the name Jyeṣṭheśa of Maheśa, the enumeration of holy temples, the origin of Kandukeśa and Vyāghreśvara.

87. The origin of Śaileśa and Ratneśvara as well as that of Kṛttivāsas; the abode of the deities; Durgā's exploit over the Asuras.

88. Durgā's victory, the description of Oṁkāreśa, then the greatness of Oṁkāra, the origin of the three-eyed Lord Śiva.

89. The narration of Kedāra, the story of Dharmeśa born of Viṣṇu's arms (?), the narrative of Vīreśvara, the glorification of the greatness of Gaṅgā.

90. The greatness of Viśvakarmeśa, the origin of Dakṣa's Yajña as well as that of Satīśa, Amṛteśa and others, the benumbing of the arms of Parāśara.

91. The group of holy centres and shrines, the dialogue in the Mukti-Maṇḍapa (The pandal of salvation) the prosperity of Viśveśa and then the circumambulatory pilgrimage.

(Thus the fourth part is summarised)

92. Hereafter, listen to the description of the fifth part called Avanti Khaṇḍa.[1] The narration of the forest Mahākāla Vana; then the chopping off of the head of Brahmā.

1. VV 92-141. mention the important topics in the fifth khaṇḍa—the *Avanti khaṇḍa*. One fails to understand why so much importance has been attached to this *khaṇḍa* in the NP as it devotes 49 verses to this *khaṇḍa* as compared with the meagre 17 verses to *Kāśi Khaṇḍa* which is now so popular.

It may be further added that the geographical location of each *Tīrtha* mentioned here is expected in the annotations of the *Skanda Purāṇa* proper (translation or original text) and is thus beyond the scope of *Nārada Purāṇa*.

93. The rules regarding expiatory rites; the origin of Agni; the arrival of the Devas, the initiation of the Devas; Śiva's hymn that is destructive of different kinds of sins.

94. The narration of Kapālamocaṇa, the situation of the forest Mahākālavana, the holy centre of the Lord Kanakhala that is destructive of all sins.

95. The pool called after the Apsaras (celestial damsels) and the lake of Rudra that is meritorious, the holy centres of the Lord of Kuḍava, Vidyādhara, and Markaṭeśvara.

96. The holy waters of Svargadvāracatussindhu (the four rivers that constitute the doorways to heaven), Śaṅkaravāpikā (The tank of Śaṅkara), Śaṅkarārka, Gandhavatī Tīrtha, that is destructive of sins.

97. Daśāśvamedhika and Anaṁśa Tīrtha that bestow all Siddhis, the procession of Piśācaka, etc, Hanumadīśvara, Kavaceśvara.

98. The procession of or pilgrimage to Mahākāleśa, the holy centre of Valmīkeśvara, the circumabulations of Kuśasthalī in the fifth Tīrtha called Śukra (?).

99. The centres of Akrūra, Ekapāda and Candrārkavaibhava; the holy shrine called Karabheśa and those of Lakuṭeśa and others.

100-101. Mārkaṇḍeśa, Yajña-vāpī-someśa, Naṛakāntaka, Kedāreśvara, Rāmeśa, Saubhāgyeśa, Narārkara shrines. Then Keśavārka, Śaktibheda, Svarṇasāra, and other shrines, the holy spots of Oṁkāreśa etc, the glorification of Andhakāśruti.

102. The number of Liṅgas in the Kālāraṇya, the shrine named Svargaśṛṅga (gold horn), the names of Kuśasthalī, Avanti and Ujjayinī.

103. The shrines named Padmāvatī, Kumudvatī, and Amarāvatī the names of Viśālā, and Pratikalpa and Amarāvatī, the subduing of fever.

104. The benefit of the names of Śiva etc., the eulogy of Śiva sung by the Nāgas (Serpents), the narrative of killing Hiraṇyākṣa, the holy centre of Sundarakuṇḍa.

105. The holy centres of Vindhyavāsin (residing in Vindhya) called Nīlagaṅgāpuṣkara, the holy centre destructive of sins, called Puruṣottama.

106. The Gomatī river, the holy pool of Vāmana, the thousand names of Viṣṇu, the lake of Vīreśvara, the shrine of Kālabhairava.

107. The greatness of Nāgapañcamī, the Jayantikā (birth anniversary) of Nṛsiṁha, the procession of Kuṭumbeśvara, the glorification of divine Sādhakas.

108. The holy shrine called Karkarāja, the bearing of Vighneśa and other Devas, the review of many holy centres in the Rudrakuṇḍa (the holy pit of Rudra) and others.

109. The holy pilgrimage of the eight holy centres, the greatness of Revā, the detachment of Dharmaputra, his meeting with Mārkaṇḍeya.

110. Narration of the most excellent experience,* the glorification of Amṛta; Different names of Narmadā in the different Kalpas.

111. The hymn of Narmadā composed by the sages, the story of Kālarātri; thereafter the prayer of Mahādeva, the wonderful stories of several Kalpas.

112. The story of Viśalyā, the story of Jāleśvara, the description of Gaurī Vrata, the burning of Tripuras.

113. The injunctions regarding the casting off of the body, then the confluence of Kāverī, the holy shrines of Dārutīrtha and Brahmāvarta, alongwith the story of Īśvara.

114-115. The following series of shrines are then described : Agni Tīrtha, Ravi Tīrtha, Meghanāda Tīrtha, Ādidāruka Tīrtha, Deva Tīrtha, Narmadeśa, Kapila Tīrtha, Karañja Tīrtha, Kuṇḍaleśa, Pippalāda, Vimaleśa and Śūlabhṛt, then the story of abduction of Śacī and killing of Abhraka. (v. l. Andhaka)

116. The Tīrtha called Śūlabhṛdudbhava where different types of charitable gifts are to be given; then the story of Dīrgha-tapas and that of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga.

*v.l.— *prāg-layānubhavākhyānam*—The experience of the initial dissolution (deluged universe)

117. Then the holy story of Citrasena, the characteristic feature of the kingdom of Kāśi,* then the description of Devaśilā (The rock of the lord) alongwith the holy centre of Śabarī.

118-121. Then the holy narrative of Vyādha (the hunter); then the holy centre of Puṣkariṇyarka; then the following holy pools and shrines—Āpretyeśvara Tīrtha, Śakra Tīrtha, Karoṭika, Kumāreśa, Agastyeśa, Ānandeśa, Mātṛja, Lokeśa, Dhanadeśa, Maṅgaleśa, Kāmaja, Nāgeśa, Gopāra. Gautama, Śaṅkhacūḍaka, Nāradeśa, Nandikeśa, Varuṇeśvara Tīrtha, Dadhiskanda and other holy centres; then Hanūmateśvara, Rāmeśvara and other holy centres, Someśa, Piṅgaleśvara.

122-129. Ṛṇamokṣa, Kapileśa, Pūtikeśa, Jaleśaya, Caṇḍārka, Yama Tīrtha, Kālhoḍīśa, Vanādika, (v.l. Nāndīka) Nārāyaṇa, Koṭīśa, Vyāsa Tīrtha, Prabhāsaka, Nāgeśa, Saṅkarṣaṇaka, Praśrayeśvara Tīrtha, the holy confluence of Airaṇḍī, Suvarṇaśilā Tīrtha, Karañja, Kāmaha, Bhāṇḍīra, Rohiṇībhava, Cakra Tīrtha, Dhautapāpa, Skanda, the holy place named after Aṅgiras, Koṭi Tīrtha, Tīrtha called Ayonī, Aṅgāra Tīrtha, Trilocana Tirtha, Indreśa, Kambukeśa, Someśa, Kohaneśa, Nārmada, Ārka, Āgneya, the excellent Bhārgaveśvara Brāhma, Daiva, Mārgeśa, Ādivārāhakeśvara, Rāmeśa, Siddheśa Āhalya, Kaṅkaṭeśvara, Śākra, Saumya, Nādeśa, Toyeśa, Rukmiṇībhava, Yojaneśa, Varāheśa, Dvādaśī Śiva Tīrtha, Siddheśa, Maṅgaleśa, Liṅgatīrtha, Vārāha Tīrtha, Kuṇḍeśa, Śvetavārāha, Garbhāveśa, Ravīśvara.

130-135. The holy centres of Śukla etc., Huṅkārasvāmi Tīrtha, Saṅgameśa, Nahuṣeśa, Mokṣaṇa, Pañcagopa, Nāgaśāva, Siddheśa, Mārkaṇḍatīrtha, Akrūratīrtha, Kāmodatīrtha, Śūlāropatīrtha, Māṇḍavya, Gopakeśvara, Kapileśa, Piṅgaleśa, Bhūteśa, Gaṅgā Tīrtha, Gautama Tīrtha, Āśvamedha, Bhṛgukaccha Kedāreśa, the dispeller of sins, Kālakaleśa, Jāleśa, Śālagrāma, Varāhaka, Candraprabhāsa, Āditya, Śrīpati Tīrtha, Haṁsaka, Mūlyasthāna (the original abode), Śūleśa, the Tīrtha called Ugra, Citradaivaka, Śikhīśa, Koṭi Tīrtha, Daśakanya, Suvarṇaka, Ṛṇamokṣa, (that which liberates from

*v.l. *Kāśi-rājasya mokṣaṇam*—Salvation of Kāśirāja

indebtedness), Bhārabhūti, Puṅkha Muṇḍi, Ḍiṇḍima (a drum), Āmaleśa, Kapāleśa, Śṛṅga Eraṇḍī Bhava, Koṭi Tīrtha and Loṭaneśa. Thereafter, there is Phalaśruti (A remark like the Vedic passage indicating the benefit) (phalastuti[2]—praise of the benefit).

136-140. In the context of the greatness of Dṛmijaṅgala,[1] there is the story of Rohitāśva, the narration of Dhundhumāra the strategem of destroying Dhundhu; the killing of Dhundhu and the birth of Citravaha, his greatness, the prowess of Caṇḍīśa, Ratīśvara, Kedāreśa, the Lakṣatīrtha, the holy water originating from Viṣṇupadī (Firmament), Mukhāra, Cyavana, Andhāsya and the lake of Brahmā, the Tīrthas of Cakra, Lalitā, the holy centres full of cows, Rudrāvarta and Mārkaṇḍa, the holy centres that dispel sins, Śravaṇeśa, Śuddhapaṭa, Devāndhupretatīrtha, the origin of holy centre Jihvoda, Śivodbheda and their eulogy in regard to their efficacy.

141. This is the summary of the part called Avanti Khaṇḍa;[3] it is destructive of sins of those who listen. Henceforth, the sixth part named Nāgarakhaṇḍa[3] is being narrated.

The Nāgarakhaṇḍa[4]

142. The narration of the origin of Liṅga, the auspicious story of Hariścandra, the greatness of Viśvāmitra, the attainment of heaven by Triśaṅku.

1. The topics from *Dṛmijaṅgala* upto *Śivodbheda* mentioned in VV 136-140 are not traced in any extant edition of *Avanti Khaṇḍa* indicating that the author of Nārada Purāṇa had a different version of Sk. P. than the present printed ones.

2. The Veṅkaṭeśvara, Bangabasi and the GM editions of the Sk. P. give a big section of 84 chapters called *Caturaśīti-liṅga-māhātmya*. But the NP does not mention this whole section.

3. It is surprising that the NP does not even mention the big *Revākhaṇḍa* the Uttarārdha of *Avantikhaṇḍa*—which consists of 232 chapters and skips to the *Nāgara-khaṇḍa*.

4. VV. 142-167 give us the main topics in the *Nāgara-khaṇḍa*, many of which are found in the extant Sk. P.

143. In the context of the greatness of Hāṭakeśvara, the killing of demon Vṛtra, the description of the holy centres Nāgabila, Śaṅkha Tīrtha and Acaleśvara.

144-145a. The narration of the city of Camatkāra, that is very interesting, then the description of these holy centres—Gayaśīrsa, Bālasākhya, Bālamaṇḍa, Mṛgāhvaya, Viṣṇupāda, Gokarṇa, Yugarūpa and Samāśraya (that is the support of the people).

145b-146. Siddheśvara, the holy pool of Nāgas, the holy centre of seven sages, of Agastya as well as that of Bhrūṇagarta, Naleśa, of Bhīṣma, Vaiḍuram, Arkaka (pertaining to the Sun-God), Śārmiṣṭha (related to Śarmiṣṭhā), Somanātha, Daurga, Ātarjakeśvara.

147-150. The story of killing of Jamadagni; the story of (Paraśurāma's vow of) making (the country) devoid of Kṣatriyas, the holy centres of Rāmahrada, Nāgapura, Ṣaḍliṅga, Yajñabhū, the three shrines of Trikārka beginning with Muṇḍīra, the marriage of Satī, the shrines of Rudraśīrṣa, Yāgeśa, Vālakhilya and Garuḍa. The curse of Lakṣmī, the twentyseven palaces of Soma; the shrine called Pāṇḍuka erected by Ambā, Āgneya (belonging to the fire God), Brahmakuṇḍa, Gomukha, the shrine called Lohayaṣṭi, the goddess Ajapāleśvarī, the shrine of Śaniścara, (Saturn), the Rājavāpī (Royal tank) Rameśa, Lakṣmaṇeśvara.

151-158. The excellentmost among the excellent Liṅgas—Kuśeśa and Laveśa. The story of Aṣṭaṣaṣṭi and that of Damayantī, the origin of the holy centre Bhaktikā Tīrtha, Kṣemaṁkarī, Kedāra, Śukla Tīrtha, Mukhārka, the narration of the shrine Satyasandheśvara, the story of Karṇotpalā, Aṭeśvara, the shrines of Yājñavalkya, Gaurī, and Gaṇeśa. Then the description of Vāstupāda, the narration of Ajāgṛha, Saubhāgyāndhu (the well of good fortune), the shrine Śūleśa, the story of Dharmarāja, the story of Lord the bestower of sweets, three shrines of Gaṇapati, the story of Jābāli and the story of Makareśa, the description of Kāleśvarī and Andhaka, the holy pool of Apsaras (celestial damsels), the shrines of Puṣyāditya and Rauhitāśva, the narrative of the origin of Nāgara, the stories of Bhṛgu Viśvāmitra, Sarasvatī,

Pippalāda, Kaṁsārīśa and Peṇḍaka, the story of the Yajña of Brahmā alongwith the narration of Sāvitrī, Raivata, Bhārata Yajña and the survey of the important holy centres.

159. The three Kṣetras (holy shrines) of Kauṛava, (i. e. the descendants of Kuru) Hāṭakeśa and Prabhāsa, the three forests of Puṣkara, Naimiṣa, and Dharma.

160. The three cities viz. Vārāṇasī, Dvārakā and Avanti, the three Vanas (Parks) viz. Vṛndāvana, Khāṇḍavavana and Advaika (?) [ta ?] vana.

161. The three excellent villages, viz. Kalpagrāma, Śālagrāma and Nandigrāma, the three Tīrthas (holy centres) viz. Asi Tīrtha, Śukla Tīrtha and Pitṛ Tīrtha.

162-63a. The three excellent Parvatas (mountains) viz. Śrī Parvata, Arbuda Parvata (mount Abu) and Raivata Parvata; the three rivers Gaṅgā, Narmadā, and Sarasvatī, each of these is glorified as yielding one and a half crore of benefits.

163b-164a. The four holy centres of Kūpikā, Saṅkhatīrtha, Amaraka and Bālamaṇḍana are said to yield the same benefit as Hāṭakeśakṣetra.

164b-165. The Śrāddhakalpa (rituals regarding Śrāddha) according to Sāmba (alongwith Ambā and Āditya ?), that of Yudhiṣṭhira and Andhaka; the holy rite of Aśūnya Śayana in the four months (of the rainy season), lying down on water., the shrine of Maṅkaṇeśa, the festival of Śivarātri, Tulāpuruṣadāna rite.

166. The gift of lands, the shrines of Vānakeśa and Kapālamocaneśvara, Pāpapiṇḍa (the lump of sins), Māsalaiṅga (the worship of Liṅga for a month), the glorification of the extent and magnitude of Yugas.

167. The narration of Nimbeśa and Śākambharī deities, the description of Rudraikādaśa (the eleven Rudras), the narration of the greatness of charitable gifts and the glorification of twelve Ādityas.

The Prabhāsa khaṇḍa[1]

168a. Thus Nāgara khaṇḍa (has been summarised). Now the part called Prabhāsa khaṇḍa is being mentioned.

1. VV. 168 to 212 give the detailed contents of the last—*Prabhāsa*

168b-169. The shrines Someśa and Viśveśa, the great and meritorious holy centre called Arkasthala, the narration of Siddheśvara etc., is made here separately; the shrines of Agni-Tīrtha, Kapardīśa and Kedāreśa and the bestowers of goals (heavenly abodes).

170. The different forms of Hara—viz. Bhīma, Bhairava, Caṇḍīśa, etc., the planets viz. the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rāhu and Śikhin (Ketu).

171. Then five others Siddheśvara and the forms ofRudra, are stationed there. The goddesses of excellent beauty—Ajā, Pālā, Maṅgalā and Laliteśvarī.

172-74. Then the shrines of Lakṣmīśa, Yādaveśa, Urvīśa, Kāmeśvara, Gaurīśa, Varuṇeśa, Durvāseśa, Gaṇeśvara, Kumāreśa, Caṇḍakalpa and Śakulīśvara. Then the holy story of Koṭīśa, Bālabrahma, etc., then the stories of Narakeśa, Saṁvarteśa and Nidhīśvara, then that of Balabhadreśvara, Gaṅgā and Gaṇapa.

175. Then the good story of the river named Jāmbavatī and the well called Pāṇḍukūpa, the story of Śatamedha (hundred sacrifices), Lakṣamedha (hundred-thousand sacrifices) and Koṭimedha (a crore of sacrifices.)

176-177a. The prominent story of Durvāsas, Arka, Ghaṭasthāna (place of Water pot) and Hiraṇyasaṅgama (confluence of the Hiraṇya), the separate stories of Nagarārka, Kṛṣṇa, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Samudra (sea), Kumārī (Virgin), Rṣetrapāla (the guardian of the fields) and Brahmeśa.

177b-178. The glorification of Piṅgalā and Saṅgameśa, Śaṅkara, Arkeśa, Ghaṭeśa, the holy centre Ṛṣitīrtha, Nandārka-tritakūpa, the wonderful story of Parṇārka and Nyaṅkumatī with Sopāna.

179. The news (or the details) of Varāhasvāmin and that of Chāyāliṅga and Gulpha, the story of Kanakanandā as well as that of Kuntī and Gaṅgeśa.

180. Then the story of Camasa, Udbheda, Vidura and Trilokeśa (Lord of the three worlds), then the stories of Maṅkaṇeśa, Traipureśa and Ṣaṇḍa-Tīrtha.

Khaṇḍa which agrees with the extant published Sk. P., showing the degree of authenticity of the *Khaṇḍa*.

181. Then the stories of Sūryaprācī and Trīkṣaṇa (three-eyed) as well as that of Umānātha, the stories of Bhūddāra (the uplifter of the Earth), Śūlasthala (spot of Trident), that of Cyavana and Arkeśa.

182. The story of the holy spots of Ajapāleśa, Bālārka and Kuberasthala, the meritorious story of Ṛṣitoyā, the glorification of Saṅgaleśvara.

183. The narration of Nārada and Āditya, review of Nārāyaṇa, the greatness of Taptakuṇḍa, description of Mūlacaṇḍīśa.

184. The story of the four-faced presiding deity of the attendants and Kalambeśvara, the story of Gopālasvāmin and Vakulasvāmin, as well as the Maruts (Winds).

185. Then the stories of Kṣemārka, Unnata Vighneśa and Jalasvāmi, the stories of Kālamegha, Rukmiṇī, Durvāsā, ĪśvaraBhadra.

186. The stories of the shrines Śaṅkhāvarta, Mokṣatīrtha, Goṣpada and Acyutasadman ((Abode of Acyuta) and of the deities Jāleśvara, Huṁkāreśvara and Caṇḍīśa.

187. The wonderful story of Vighneśa stationed in Āśāpura and that of Kalākuṇḍa, the story of Kapileśa and of Jaradgavāśiva (Siva with an old cow).

188. The story of Nala and Karoṭeśvara and that of Hāṭakeśvara, the Yantra and the Bhūṣā (ornament) of Nāradeśa, Durgakūṭa and Gaṇeśa's story.

189. The story of Bhairavīs called Suparṇā, Elā and that of Bhallatīrtha, the glorification of Kardamāla and Gupta Someśvara.

190. The stories of Bahusvarṇeśa (Lord of much gold), Śṛṅgeśa and Koṭīśvara, the stories of Mārkaṇḍeśvara, Dāmodaragṛha and Koṭīśa.

191. Svarṇarekhā, Brahmakuṇḍa, the shrines of Kuntīśvara and Bhīmeśvara, the pit of Mṛgī (hind) is remembered in the temple of Sarvasva and Vastrāpatha.

192. The wonderful stories of Durgā, Bhileśa, Gaṅgeśa and Raivata, then the story of Arbudeśvara, the glorification of Acaleśvara.

193. The story of Nāgatīrtha, the description of

Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, the great eminence of Bhadrakarṇa and that of Trinetra (the three-eyed) thereafter.

194. The greatness of Kedāra, the glorification of the arrival at the holy centre, the stories of the holy centre in the form of Koṭīśvara and that of Arṣīkeśa.

195. The glorification of Siddheśa, Śukreśvara and Maṇikarṇīśa, the description of Paṅgutīrtha, Yamatīrtha and Vārāhatīrtha.

196. The greatness of Candra Prabhāsa, Piṇḍoda, Śrīmātā, Śuklatīrtha and Kātyāyanī, then the greatness of Piṇḍāraka.

197. Then the glory of Kanakhala, Cakratīrtha and Mānuṣatīrtha, the story of Kapilāgnitīrtha and that of Raktānubhandha.

198. The pilgrimage to Gaṇeśa and Pārtheśvara shrines, the story of Ujjvala, Caṇḍīsthāna (abode of the Goddess), the greatness of Śivakuṇḍa originating from Nāga, the story of Maheśa.

199. The story of Rāmeśvara and the origin of Mārkaṇḍeya, the stories severally of Uddālakeśa, Siddheśa and Gatatīrtha.

200. The origin of Śrīdevakhāta and the shrines of Vyāsatīrtha and Gautama-tīrtha, the greatness of Kulasantāra and that of the Tīrthas of Rāma and Koṭi.

201. The wonderful origin of Candrodbheda, Īśānaśṛṅga, and Brahmasthāna, the auspicious stories of Tripuṣkara, Rudrahrada and Guheśvara.

202. The greatness of Avimukta and Umā-Maheśvara, the glory of Mahaujas, the description of Jambūtīrtha.

203. The story of Gaṅgādhara and Miśraka and the eulogy of the benefit (of reading this). In the context of the greatness of Dvārakā, the story of Candraśarman.

204. The holy rite of Ekādaśī and the narration of (the mode) of worship and keeping awake (on Ekādaśī night), the description of Mahādvādaśikā and the meeting of Prahlāda and the sage.

205. The anecdote of Durvāsas, the glorification of the beginning of Yātrā (pilgrimage), the narration of the origin of Gomatī and the benefit of ablution etc., therein.

206. The greatness of Cakratīrtha, the confluence of the river Gomatī (near Dvārakā) and the ocean (the Arabian sea), the narration of the Hrada (deep pool) of Sanaka and others, then the story of Nṛgatīrtha.

207. The holy story of Gopracāra, the arrival of cowherdesses at Dvārakā, the narration of Gopīsaras (the lake of the cowherdesses); the glorification of Brahmatīrtha.

208. The narration of the advent of five rivers, alongwith different stories and the glorification of Śivaliṅga, Gadātīrtha and the worship etc. of Kṛṣṇa.

209. The story of the Mūrti (the idol) of Trivikrama, the conversation between Durvāsas and Kṛṣṇa, the benefit of the recital of death of Kuśa daitya and the special worship thereof.

210. The glorification of the advent of all the Tīrthas in Gomatī and Dvārakā, the survey of Kṛṣṇa's temple and the coronation at Dvārāvatī.

211. There the story of the residence (of all Tīrthas) that holy centre; the glorification of the merit of Dvārakā. O Brāhmaṇa, this is the summary of the seventh part called Prabhāsikā Khaṇḍa.

212-213. In the course of description of the greatness of Śiva in the Skanda Purāṇa with all the gloriousmost stories, he who writes this out and gives it to a Brāhmaṇa on the full moon day in the month of Māgha, receiving him duly and with the charitable gift of a gold trident, rejoices in the region of Śiva.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIVE

The Vāmana Purāṇa[1] : *Contents*

Brahmā said :

1. O dear one, listen, I shall recount to you the Purāṇa named Vāmana. It contains stories of Trivikrama and comprises ten thousand verses.

2. It contains the narratives of events of the Kūrma Kalpa; it has stories descriptive of Vargatraya (the three aims of life viz. virtue, love and wealth). It is in two parts. It is auspicious to the narrator as well as to the listener.

3. At the outset, there is the enquiry about the Purāṇa; the cutting off of the head of Brahmā, the story of Kapālamocana, the destruction of Dakṣa's Yajña.

4. The description of (and narration about) Hara in the form of Kāla, then the burning of Kāma, the fight between Prahlāda and Nārāyaṇa, the war between the Devas and the Asuras.

5. The narration of the story of Sukeśī and Arka, then the Bhuvanakośa (description of the worlds), then the description of Kāmyavratas (Vratas performed with some desired object), then the story of Śrī Durgā.

1. According to the NP. Vāyu, Mt. P., Bh. P. the *Vāmana* P. consists of 10,000 verses. Further the NP states that the *Vāmana* consists of two parts *Pūrvabhāga* and *Uttara bhāga* (or *Vṛddha Vāmana*) the latter containing the following *saṁhitās* viz. the *Māheśvarī*, *Bhāgavatī*, *Saurī* and *Gaṇeśvarī*, each consisting of 1000 verses (VV. 13-14). But the whole of the *Uttarabhāga* is lost leaving the Pūrvārdha of 6000 verses. But actually in Veṅkaṭeśvara edit. there are 5451 verses (chs. 26, 44 and 93 being in prose).

There is a discrepancy in the total number of chapters in the MSS of this Purāṇa e. g. Devanāgarī MSS (94 chs.), Telugu MSS (89 chs.), Śāradā code (85 chs.), Adyar Mss (67 chs.). (A. S. Gupta—PJ. V. pp. 360-66). Although many of the topics mentioned in the NP are found in the printed edition, the absence of the *Uttarārdha* and the no. of verses in the extant Purāṇa show that the NP refers to a different version of the *Vāmana Purāṇa*.

By the way it may be noted that though this was originally a Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa, Śaivism has considerably influenced it as the episodes of Śiva are also described in details. This synthetic tendency—harmonizing Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism etc. by regarding these deities as representatives of the *Brahman*—is found practically in all Purāṇas.

6. Then the story of Tapatī, description of Kurukṣetra, the incomparable greatness of Satya, the glorification of the nativity of Pārvatī.

7. Her penance, and then the marriage, thereafter, the story of Gaurī, thereafter, the subsidiary story of Kauśikī and then the story of Kumāra.

8. Then the story of killing Andhaka, then the narrative of Sādhyas, afterwards, the story of Jābāli, the wonderful story of Arajā.

9. The fight between Andhaka and Īśvara, Andhaka given the status of a Gaṇa (attendant of Śiva), the narration of the Maruts, then the story of Bali.

10. Then Lakṣmī's story, thereafter the story of Trivikrama, then auspicious stories are being narrated in the course of pilgrimage of Prahlāda.

11. Thereafter, the story of Dhundhu; then the story of the Preta (Ghosts), the story of Nakṣatrapuruṣa (The name of a Vrata), then the story of Śrīdāma.

12. At the end of the story of Trivikrama, there is an excellent hymn composed by Brahmā. In the course of conversation between Prahlāda and Bali in Sutala (Netherworlds), Hari is praised.

13. Thus the story of the first half of this Purāṇa is mentioned to you. Hereafter, listen to its latter half called Bṛhad Vāmana.

14. There are four Saṁhitās (compendiums) therein each consisting of a thousand verses. They are Māheśvarī, Bhāgavatī, Saurī and Gaṇeśvarī.[1]

1. According to the NP, the Kūrma Purāṇa consists of Brāhmī, Bhāgavatī, Saurī and Vaiṣṇavī Saṁhitās and has 17,000 verses in all (verse 3), a figure endorsed by the Bh. P. (XII. 13, I). But the *Vāyu* and *Matsya* credit it with 18,003 verses, while according to AP (272-10) it has 8000 verses only. The *Kūrma B* itself states that it consists of *Brāhmī, Bhāgavatī, Saurī* and *Vaiṣṇavī Saṁhitās* and the *Brāhmī* contains 6000 verses. But actually Veṅkaṭeśvara Press edit. gives 5925 verses. The NP. gives the topical analysis of each *Saṁhitā* and states the sub-sections of each Saṁhitā e. g. the Bhāgavatī Saṁhitā has five sections (*Pañca-padī*), the Saurī, six (*ṣoḍhā*), Vaiṣṇavi, four (*catuṣpadī*). The total No. of verses in each section is given as 6000, 4000, 2000 and 5000 verses respectively. Ch. 106.

15. In the compilation called Māheśvarī, there is the glorification of Kṛṣṇa and his devotees. In the compendium Bhāgavatī, there is the wonderful story of the incarnation of the Mother of the Universe.

16. In the compendium Saurī, the glory of the Sun is spoken (praised) which is destructive of sins. In the compendium Gaṇeśvarī there is the story of Gaṇeśa and Maheśa.

17. This is a wonderful Purāṇa named Vāmana. It is narrated by Pulastya to the noble-souled Nārada.

18. Then it was acquired from Nārada by Vyāsa, a very great Ātman. From Yyāsa his disciple Romaharṣaṇa acquired this.

19. He will narrate it to the Brāhmaṇas of Naimiṣa forest. Thus the auspicious Vāmana Purāṇa has been traditionally handed down and acquired.

20-22. Those who read this or listen to this, attain the greatest goal. He who writes this out and gives it to a Brāhmaṇa Vedic scholar at the time of autumnal equinox alongwith ghee and a cow, uplifts his Pitṛs (ancestors) from hells and leads them to heaven. After enjoying all worldly pleasures and dying thereafter, he attains the great region of Viṣṇu.

All this evidence shows that the author of the NP had positively a different and a larger version than the extant KP.

The extant (both Veṅkaṭeśvara and Kāśirāja) editions of KP tally to a great extent with the *Brāhmī Saṁhitā* and the other *Saṁhitās* seem to have been lost.

Hazra notes that originally the *Kūrma* was a *Pāñcarātra Purāṇa* which was subsequently Pāśupatised. (vide PR. pp. 57. ff.)

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIX

The Kūrma Purāṇa : Contents

God Brahmā said :

1-2. O dear child, O Marīci, listen to the Purāṇa called Kūrma. It covers the events of the Lakṣmī Kalpa. In the context of Indradyumna, the merciful Hari, assuming the form of a tortoise, proclaimed it to the sages the respective greatness of virtue, love, wealth and salvation.

3. It consists of seventeen thousand verses.[1] It is very auspicious with four Saṃhitās. O sage, many of the Brāhma dharmas (religious duties) mentioned formerly, have been explained in it.

4. They are dealt with in the context of different stories. They are the bestowers of good position (hereafter) unto men. In the first subdivision there is the usual beginning at the outset.

5. There is the dialogue between Lakṣmī and Indradyumna and the conversation between the Divine Tortoise and the groups of sages. Then is the account of the four castes (Varṇas) and stages in life (Āśramas, and their (prescribed) duties, the narration of the creation of the Universe.

6. There is a brief description about the calculation of Time (such as Yugas, Manvantaras), at the end of the dissolution, there is the eulogy of the Lord (by Siddhas), then a brief description of the creation (of the universe) and the story of Śaṅkara.

7. The thousand names of Pārvatī, the exposition of the Yoga philosophy, the description of the family of Bhṛgu, and then that of Svāyaṃbhuva (Manu).

1. According to the VP, Vāyu, Bh. P. (xii. 13. 4-9) and Mt. P, itself, this Purāṇa consists of 14,000 verses while AP credits it with 13000 (or 13,003 as per A. S. Gupta) the BVP with 18,000 verses. The Ānandāśrama Press edit. contains 14,062 verses and its contents agree in general with those given in the NP. This agreement is probably due to its being the best preserved and the earliest of the 18 Purāṇas (Kane—HD. vii. p. 899). Kane also notes that it has perhaps the largest number of *Smṛti* chapters among Purāṇas and assigns 200 A. D. to 400 A. D. as its probable date.

8. The origin of the Devas and others, then the destruction of Dakṣa's Yajña, the story of the creation by Dakṣa, then the narration of the lineage of Kaśyapa (containing the account of the Solar and Lunar dynasties).

9. The description of the family of Atri, the auspicious story of Kṛṣṇa, the dialogue between Kṛṣṇa and Mārtaṇḍa (The Sun-god) and the conversation between Vyāsa and the Pāṇḍavas.

10. The narration of the characteristic nature of different Yugas (Yugadharma), the glorification of Vyāsa and Jaimini, the greatness of Vārāṇasī and Prayāga.

11-12. The description of the three worlds, the review of the branches of Vedas. In the latter half of the Purāṇa there are the Īśvaragītā and the Vyāsagītā. These two illuminate the different kinds of Dharmas; the greatness of the different holy centres is mentioned separately.

13. Then there is the narration of Pratisarga (Dissolution of the Universe). This much is the summary of the first division named Brāhmī Saṁhitā. Henceforth, the compendium Bhāgavatī Saṁhitā is reviewed.

14. In this division, the separate activities of the different castes are narrated. In the first quarter of this Saṁhitā, the determination of duties etc. of the Brāhmaṇas has been narrated.

15. O dear one, it consists of good and disciplined life and it enhances their enjoyment and the happiness of worldly pleasures. In the second quarter, the functions of the profession of the Kṣatriyas are clearly enunciated.

16-19a. Ifa (Kṣatriya) abides by these, he shall eschew sins and go to heaven. In the third quarter, the fourfold activities of the Vaiśyas have been explained. If these are followed, one shall attain excellent salvation. In its fourth quarter, the activities of the Śūdras are explained. If these are followed, Lord Viṣṇu becomes pleased and increases the welfare of men. In the fifth quarter the duties and functions of the mixed castes are explained. If they are followed, one attains excellent state of future life.

19b. O sage, thus is narrated the second compendium (Saṁhitā) consisting of five sections (Pañcapadī).

20. The third compendium is called Saurī. It lays down the various duties of men. To men who desire (to obtain some objects), it instructs the six karmans and their Siddhis in six different ways.

21. The fourth compendium is called Vaiṣṇavī. It is glorified as the bestower of Liberation from Saṁsāra. It consists of four sections (Catuṣ-padī). It is veritable Brahma i.e. the Veda incarnate to the twice-borns.

22. The four Saṁhitās contain respectively six thousand, four thousand, two thousand and five thousand verses.

23. This Kūrma Purāṇa yields the benefit of four Vargas (the aims of life) viz. Dharma, Artha, Kāma, Mokṣa. It yields the best of all goals to the men who read and listen to it.

24. He who writes this (Purāṇa) with devotion and gives it to a Brāhmaṇa during the transit of the sun from the tropics, alongwith the replica of a tortoise in gold, attains the greatest goal.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN

The Matsya Purāṇa : Contents

Lord Brahmā said :

1. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I shall, henceforth, recount the Matsya Purāṇa to you. In it, all the events of the seven Kalpas in the world, have been condensed.

2. It has been composed by Vyāsa, a scholar in the Vedas, in about fourteen thousand verses.* He has begun by describing Narasiṁha.

*The *Vāyu*, the *Matsya* and the *Bh. P.* state this figure, but AP. gives 13000 and the Br. V. 18000 verses as the figure. Actually the Ānandāśrama edition contains 14,062 verses. The contents of that edition tally with those given by the NP. here.

3. The discussion between Manu and Matsya, then the narration (description) of the Cosmic Egg; the creation of the Devas, Asuras and the Marut (wind) from the Brahman.

4. Madana-Dvādaśī (the twelfth lunar day in honour of Madana) and the worship of the guardians of the worlds; the survey of the Manvantaras, the description of the government of the kingdom by the Vaiśyas.

5. The birth of Vaivasvata (Manu) from the sun, the contact with Budha (Mercury), the narration of the lineage of the Pitṛs; the opportune time for (performance of) Śrāddha).

6. The peregrination among the Pitṛ-Tīrthas, the origin of Soma (the moon), the glorification of the lunar race and the story of Yayāti.

7. The story of Kārttavīrya, the narration of the created race, Bhṛgu's curse to Viṣṇu to take ten births on the Earth.

8. Then the glorification of Puru's race, the race of Hutāśana (the fire), the path of activity. Thereafter, the narration of the Purāṇa.

9. The Vrata (holy rite) called Nakṣatra Puruṣa, Mārtaṇḍa-śayana, the Vrata of Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī (the eighth day of the dark half of Śrāvaṇa observance in honour of Kṛṣṇa's birth) and that of Rohiṇīcandra.

10. The greatness of constructing tanks; the gift of the trees, the Vrata called Saubhāgya and Śayana Agastya Vrata.

11. The Vrata of Anantatṛtīyā, that of Rasakalyāṇinī, that of Ānandakarī and then the Sārasvata (belonging to Sarasvatī) Vrata.

12. Uparāgābhiṣeka (Ablution at the time of eclipse Saptamī śayana, Bhīma Dvādaśī, Anaṅgaśayana rite.

13. Aśūnyaśayanavrata, Aṅgārakavrata (holy rite of Mars) Saptamī saptaka (seven Saptamīs i.e. seventh lunar day) Viśokadvādaśīvrata (holy rite on the twelfth lunar day for wiping off grief).

14. The gift of Meru, ten-fold specification of evil planets; the narration of the forms of planets, Śivacaturdaśī (the fourteenth day of Śiva).

15. The abandonment of all fruits, the holy observance of Sūryavāra (Sunday), the taking of bath at the time of

Saṅkrānti (Solar Transit from one sign of Zodiac to another), the holy rite of Vibhūti Dvādaśī.

16. The greatness of Ṣaṣṭhīvratas (holy rites on the sixth Lunar day) (leading Ṣaṣṭivratas—sixty holy rites), then the rules of procedure regarding holy baths, the greatness of Prayāga, the description of continents and the worlds.

17. The movement in the firmament, the greatness of Dhruva (Pole Star), the abodes of the leading Devas, the illumination of the three cities.

18. The greatness of leading Pitṛs, the description of Manvantaras, the creation of the set of four Yugas and the review of Yugadharma (the characteristics peculiar to the different Yugas).

19. The birth of Vajrāṅga and the nativity of Tāraka, the greatness of the demon Tāraka, the glorification of God Brahmā.

20. The nativity of Pārvatī, the penance-grove of Śiva, the burning of the body of Anaṅga (Cupid) and the grief of Rati.

21. The penance-grove of Gaurī, soothing by Śiva, the conversation between Pārvatī and the sages, the auspicious celebration of Śiva's marriage.

22. The birth of Kumāra and the victory of Kumāra, the terrible killing of Tāraka, the description of Narasiṁha.

23. The creation of the lotus-born deity; the killing of Andhaka, the greatness of Vārāṇasī as well as that of Narmadā.

24. The description of Pitṛs according to the Gotras and Pravaras, the glorification of the Pitṛgāthā (song of Pitṛs) Ubhayamukhīdānam (gift of a cow while giving birth to a calf and hence two-faced) and the gift of Kṛṣṇājina (deerskin of a black antelope).

25. Then the story of Sāvitrī, the duties of a king, the narration of different kinds of evil portents ending with eclipses.

26. The narration of omens at the time of journey, the glorification of auspicious signs in dreams, the greatness of Vāmana and that of Varāha (Boar) thereafter.

27. The churning of the ocean, the suppression (nullification) of the poison Kālakūṭa, the clash between the Devas and

the Demons; then the science of Engineering (planning the foundation and construction of a house).

28. The characteristic features of an image (idol); then (the construction) of the temple, the characteristic features of a mansion, the characteristics of á pavilion.

29. The indication of future kings, the glorification of great gifts, the narration of Kalpas—All these are narrated in this Purāṇa.

30. This Purāṇa is pure and conducive to welfare; it causes increase in longevity and fame. He who reads this or listens to it, goes to Hari's abode.

31. He who writes this and gifts it over to a Brāhmaṇa after worshipping him on the equinoctial transit, alongwith a gold fish and a cow attains the greatest region.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT

The Garuḍa Purāṇa : Contents

God Brahmā said :

1. O Marīci, listen, I shall recount to you the auspicious Garuḍa Purāṇa.[1] On being asked, the Lord Viṣṇu, seated on Garuḍa, recounted this to Garuḍa.

1. The GP (*Garuḍa Purāṇa*) is an ancient encyclopaedia of Indian wisdom, though its *Preta-kalpa* section adds little to its glory. According to the NP. Bh. P. (xii. 13. 8) and BV. P., GP consists of 19,000 verses while according to the *Vāyu* and *Mt. P* the total no. of its verses is 18,000 (Kane HD. vii. 832) and according to AP 272, 21, 8000 verses. Kane's statements need revision as the Vāyu 104.8 (GM. edt.) clearly states, 19000 as its total No. of verses.

ekona-viṁśa-sāhasraṁ Vainateyam udāhṛtam|
But GP (I. 1. 35) states 8800 verses as its extent.
aṣṭau-śloka-sahasrāṇi tathā cāṣṭau śatāni ca|
Purāṇaṁ Gāruḍaṁ Vyāsaḥ purā'sau mā'bravīd idam ||

2. It consists of nineteen thousand verses. The story deals with the events of the Tārkṣya Kalpa. There is the usual enquiry about the beginning of the Purāṇa, creation of the Universe is described svccinctly.

3. O Brāhmaṇa, there are rules of the procedure of the worship of the sun; thereafter, the rules regarding initiation ceremony; then there is the worship in connection with Śrāddhas, after this (injunctions regarding) the worship of nine Vyūhas (manifestations of the Lord).

4. Then the injunctions regarding the worship, the Pañjara (ritualistic cage) pertaining to Viṣṇu, the chapter on Yoga system and the glorification of Viṣṇu's thousand names.

5. The meditation on Viṣṇu, then the worship of the Sun, thereafter, the Arcanā (worship) of Mṛtyuñjaya, the Mālā-mantra (Garland mantra), the worship of Śiva and then the worship of his attendants.

6. The adoration of Gopāla, the worship of Śrīdhara, the fascinator of the three worlds, the worship of Viṣṇu of the five Tattvas, the discus and the worship of the Lord.

7. The rites of Nyāsa, etc., the Upāsti, performance of Sandhyā prayers, the worship of Durgā and then the worship of the Devas, the worship of Maheśvara, and then the rite of wearing the Pavitra (Darbha grass with a loop worn in the finger like a ring) and worshipping.

8. The meditation on the idol of the Lord, the measurements of the sites of the buildings; the characteristics of palaces, the mode of installation of all the Devas with the several modes of worship.

The confusion is due to difference in Mss. or versions of the GP. available to the writer of the Purāṇa, e. g. GP. I. ch. 107 (ref. to the Parāśara Smṛti) is not known to the NP. noted by Dr. Ramshankar Bhattacharya (GP. Intro, p. 14-15)., the table of contents given in the NP agrees more closely with the Jibanand edt. of the GP. (though Veṅkaṭeśvara edt. of GP also tallies with that of the NP).

The *Pretakalpa* in the NP. differs in some respects from all the printed editions of the GP as accretions went on increasing in the Pretakalpa (R. S. Bhattacharya—ibid, p. 16).

A few slips in the readings of the NP (Veṅkaṭeśvara) edt.

NP. *Śrāddha* (verse 3) for GP. I. 10 *Śreyādi Pūjā.*

NP. *Vidhi Kriyā* (verse 9 for GP. I. 53) *Nidhi Kriyā.*

9. The Yoga with its eight ancillaries, the Dharmas regarding the charitable gifts, the activity and the rules of procedure regarding the expiatory rites, the narration of different continents and their Lords, the description of hells, the solar system (planetary system around the sun) and Jyotiṣa (Science of Astrology and Astronomy.)

10. The science of Sāmudrika (Palmistry of prediction based on the characteristic marks on the body), the knowledge of the notes, scrutiny tests of the Navaratnas (the nine precious stones) the glory of the holy centres, the excellent greatness of Gayā.

11. Then the description of the Manvantaras severally alongwith their divisions, the enumeration of the Pitṛs, the duties of the different Varṇas (castes), the purification of the materials of worship, the dedication of benefit unto God.

12. Śrāddha, worship of vināyaka, Grahayajña (sacrifice for propitiating the planets), the Āśramas (stages of life), the impurity due to birth and death (in the family), Nītiśāstra (science of Polity and Ethics), statements about the holy rites.

13. The Solar race, the lunar race, the narration of the incarnations of Hari, the story of Rāma, (the Rāmāyaṇa), the genealogical line of Hari (the Harivaṁśa) and then the story of Bhārata.

14. The science of life, pathology at the outset and (then) the treatment, then materia-medica (Dravyajā Guṇāḥ), the Kavaca (Mantras as coat of mail) that dispels ailments and which pertains to Viṣṇu and Garuḍa, the mantra pertaining to Tripura.

15. Praśna-cūḍā-maṇi (a treatise on answering astrologically problems asked) at the end, the exposition of the veterinary science branch about Horses, the enumeration of the names of drugs and then discussion about grammar.

16. The science of prosody, good conduct and discipline, and then the rules regarding ablution, the rites of Tarpaṇa Vaiśvadeva, the twilight prayers and the holy rites (offering ablutions to Pitṛs during Parvans such as the full moon and the new moon days and such other special days.

17. Nityaśrāddha (the daily Śrāddha), the description of

Sapiṇḍa rite, the essence of Dharma, the atonement of sins, the secondary creation, the dissolution and the particular characteristics of the Yugas are narrated, the benefit of religious rites.

18. The system of Yoga philosophy, the devotion to Viṣṇu, the benefit of obeisance to Hari, the greatness of Viṣṇu, the excellent hymn to Narasiṁha.

19. The nectar of perfect knowledge, the set of eight verses in praise of Guha (Kārttikeya), the eulogy of Viṣṇu, the principal tenets of Vedānta and Sāṁkhya, the knowledge of the Brahman and the Ātman.

20. The gist of the Bhagavadgītā, glorification of the fruit thereof—these are the topics mentioned in the first section. Then in the second section Pretakalpa (the rituals after the death) is narrated.

21. O Brāhmaṇa, on being asked by Tārkṣya (Garuḍa) the lord communicated all these things, the revelation of Dharmas, the cause of salvation of the Yogins.

22. The benefit of charitable gifts etc. is mentioned and then the Mantras for the rites of obsequies, then the description of the path leading to the world of Yama.

23. The details (regarding the performance) are stated alongwith the fruit of sixteen Śrāddhas. Expiatory rites in regard to the path of Yama, then the greatness of Dharmarāja.

24. Specific mention of the harassment of the Pretas (ghosts), review of the characteristic signs of the Pretas, the narration of the stories of the Pretas; the cause of ghosthood.

25. Consideration of religious rites for the ghosts; statements regarding Sapiṇḍīkaraṇa (the rite regarding the offerings of the balls of rice to the departed), the description of the release from ghost-hood, the charitable gifts for the purpose of salvation (of the ghosts).

26. The indispensable excellent charitable gift; the inference of things causing happiness to the ghosts; the description of the embodied soul, the description of Yama's world.

27. The narration of the uplift from ghosthood; the specification regarding the holy rites and the doer, the narra-

tion of the rites to be performed before death, the exposition of subsequent rites.

28. The 'middle' sixteen Śrāddhas, the stipulation of activities for the attainment of heaven, the reckoning of Sūtaka (period of impurity due to birth), the rite of Nārāyaṇa Bali (oblation unto Nārāyaṇa.)

29. The greatness of Vṛṣotsarga (the rite of setting a bull calf free), the avoidance of forbidden activities, statement of the rites when accidental and premature death takes place, the fruits of human action.

30. The consideration of Kṛtya and Akṛtya (what should be done and what should not be done), meditation on Viṣṇu for the purpose of Salvation, narration of the rites laid down for the attainment of heaven, the description of happiness in heaven.

31. The description of Bhūrloka, (the Earth,) the description of seven nether-worlds, the narration of five upper worlds, the description of the position of the Cosmic Egg.

32. Many stories concerning the cosmic egg, the exposition of the Brahman and the Jīva (the individual soul); the narration of the ultimate dissolution (of the Universe) and the narration of the eulogy of benefits.

33. Thus is the Purāṇa named after Garuḍa; it yields worldly pleasures and salvation; it is glorified as destructive of sins of those men who read and listen to it.

34. He who writes out this Purāṇa and gifts it to a Brāhmaṇa at the time of equinoctial transit, alongwith a pair of swans made of gold, goes to heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINE

The Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa : Contents

God Brahmā said :

1. O dear one, listen, I shall recount to you the ancient (Purāṇa) named Brahmāṇḍa.[1] It comprises twelve thousand verses. It deals with the events of the Ādikalpa.

2. It has four Pādas (quarters), the first one is called Prakriyāpāda, then is the Anuṣaṅgapāda, the third one is Upodghāta Pāda (quarter of Introductory matter) and the fourth one is Upasaṁhāra (conclusion).

3. The first two quarters constitute the first or earlier section, the third quarter forms the middle section and the fourth quarter, the final section.

4. At the beginning, there is the stipulation of duties, then the story of the Naimiṣa forest, the origin of Hiraṇyagarbha, the conception of the different worlds.

5. This is the (summary of the) first quarter. O bestower of honour, listen to the second. The narration of the Kalpas and the Manvantaras, the knowledge of the worlds, thereafter.

1. According to the NP., Bh. P. (xii. 13. 8), AP. (272. 23), the Brahmāṇḍa P. consists of 12,000 verses and 12,200 according to Mt. P. 53. 54. But the Veṅkaṭeśvara edt. gives 14,286 verses. Its contents are divided into three parts (the preliminary (*Pūrva*) part containing 2 sections: *Prakriyā* (Introduction in 5 Chs.) and *Anuṣaṅga* (various *kalpas, manu-ages*, etc. in 33 Chs.) Part II (*Upodghāta*) deals with the genealogies of kings or dynastic history. Part III (*Upa-saṁhāra*) is a recapitulation of the creation of the Universe, Manu-epochs, dissolution of the Universe). It is however, called a Purāṇa with four parts (catuṣpāda) v. 29.

Kirfel in his *Purāṇa Pañcalakṣaṇa* has noted the close similarity in hundreds of verses in the *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas* and proposed a theory that they formed one Purāṇa originally.

The *Purāṇa* traces the tradition of authorship as follows: God Brammā→Vasiṣṭha→Parāśara→Jātūkarṇya→Vāyu or Prabhañjana→Vyāsa (vv. 33-34).

This table of contents in the NP tallies in general with those of the printed editions of the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa except the 40 chapters of the Lalitā episode.

(vide table of contents of the Purāṇa Edt. Jagadish Sastri MLBD, Delhi, pp ix-xi,)

6. The narration of the mental creation, the description of Rudra's offsprings, the elegance and prowess of Mahādeva and thereafter, the creation by the sages.

7. The conquest of fires, the description of the existence of Kāla (Time), the specification of the family of Priyavrata, the length and extent of the Earth.

8. The description of the (sub-continent) Bhārata and then the review of other sub-continents, the description of Jambūdvīpa and other continents, then the description of the nether-worlds.

9. The enumeration of the upper worlds, and thereafter, the movements of the planets, the narration of the Solar Array (Planetary system), the enumeration of the Divine planets.

10. The explanation of the name Nīlakaṇṭha, prowess of Mahādeva, description of the New moon day, the review of the principles of the different Yugas.

11. The institution of the Yajñas, the last two Yugas and their activity, the characteristic features of the human beings etc. in different Yugas, the description of the spiritual lineage of the sages.

12. The narration of the classification of the Vedas, the description of Svāyambhuva Manu and the enumeration of the remaining Manvantaras and then the milking of the Earth.

13. The first part, the second quarter ends with the current creation in the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara. Then in the Upodghāta quarter, the glorification of the seven sages.

14. The family of Prajāpati; the birth of the Devas and others therefrom; the desire for victory, the narration of the origin of the Maruts.

15. The narration of the descendants of Kaśyapa, the review of the families of the sages, the narration of the Pitṛ Kalpa, and thereafter, the Śrāddha Kalpa (the rituals regarding the Śrāddha).

16. The origin of Vaivasvata Manu and thereafter, the creation by him, and the family of Manu's sons, ultimately the review of the Gandharvas.

17. The narration of the family of Ikṣvāku, the family

of the noble-souled Atri, the family of Amāvasu and the wonderful story of Raji.

18. The story of Yayāti, the review of the family of Yadu; the story of Kārttavīrya, thereafter, the story of Jamadagni and his son.

19. The description of the family of Vṛṣṇi, the birth of Sagara, the story of Bhārgava (Paraśu-Rāma) subsequent to the killing of his father.

20. The story of Sagara, the story of Bhārgava once again, the story of the battle between the Devas and Asuras, the description of the manifestation of Kṛṣṇa.

21. The meritorious hymn in praise of Indra glorified by Śukra, the narration of the greatness of Viṣṇu and the review of the family of Bali.

22. The story of the future kings after the advent of the Kali age. This is the quarter of Upodghāta in the middle section, the third quarter (in the Purāṇa).

23. I shall recount the fourth quarter viz. Upasaṁhāra (Conclusion) in the final section, the narration of Vaivasvata Manvantara precisely and in detail.

24. What has been mentioned before is mentioned here succinctly; thereafter; the story of the future Manus.

25. The specification of the Kalpas and the dissolution (then), thereafter the measurement of Time, then the fourteen worlds are mentioned along with their respective characteristics.

26. The description of hells (attained) by impious activities, the narration of Manomayapura (City of Mind) and thereafter, the Prākṛtika Laya (Dissolution within Prakṛti).

27. Thereafter, the description of Śiva's city. The threefold goal of creatures, thanks to the contact with the Guṇas, is described.

28. Thereafter, the description by means of positive and negative assertions (i. e. invariable concomitance and logical discontinuance) of the Brahman, the great Ātman, that is beyond specifications and argumentation.

29. Thus the quarter section on Upasaṁhāra has been summarised. Thus the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa comprising four quarters has been described to you.

30-33a. O Brāhmaṇa, this Purāṇa called Brahmāṇḍa is the eighteenth Purāṇa, the most essential of all chief (Purāṇas). What is originally composed of four hundred thousand verses has been narrated separately in eighteen books, O bestower of honour, by the sage Vyāsa the son of Parāśara who is the real instructor of all the sages of purified souls. Those sages who by nature practise religious virtues and bless the wretched ones, heard these Purāṇas from me and revealed them to the world.

33b-36a. Formerly, this Purāṇa has been narrated by me to Vasiṣṭha; it was passed on by him to his son Śakti, by him it was recounted to Jātūkarṇya. Then Vyāsa obtained it from the mouth of the Wind-God, making it authoritative in the world; he propagated this excellent Purāṇa in the Public (the world). O dear one, whoever glorifies this and listens to it with great concentration, dispels all sins and attains the world devoid of ailments.

36b-37. He who writes out this Purāṇa and gives it to a Brāhmaṇa after covering it with a cloth and placing it on a gold throne, attains the world of Brahman. No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

38. O Marīci, these eighteen Purāṇas narrated briefly by me to you should be heard in full.

39. The excellent man who listens to the eighteen Purāṇas or narrates them in accordance with the injunctions, is not born here again.

40. The Sūtra (summarised form) of the Purāṇas which has been mentioned by me to you now, should be practised everyday by one who desires the benefit out of the Purāṇas.

41. This should not be narrated to any one who is arrogant, hypocrite, sinful, malicious to the Devas and preceptors, knavish or one who hates good men.

42. It must be imparted to one who is quiescent, of tranquil mind, interested in service, devoid of indecent rivalry, is pure and is a good devotee of Viṣṇu,

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TEN

The Exposition of Vratas to be performed on Pratipads, the first day of the Lunar fortnight

Nārada said :

1. O holy sir, I have heard the full gist of all the Purāṇas, conveyed by you directly and orally in the same manner as it was narrated to Marīci by Brahmā, the highest deity.

2. O highly blessed one, now recount to me, in due order, the story of the Tithis (i. e. the details of the different lunar days) whereby the holy rites and observances can be decided upon.

3. Now please narrate to me the particular holy Vrata (vow or rite) alongwith its detailed procedure of worship etc. and enlighten me on what (particular) holy lunar day (tithi) and in what (particular) month that Vrata is to be performed.[1]

Sanātana said :

4. O Nārada, listen I shall recount to you the holy rites (Vratas) of the Tithis separately. They bring about all the Siddhis (accomplishments of objects) in the order of the Tithis and their lords.

5-6. God Brahmā created the entire Universe on the first day in the bright half of Caitra, at the time of sunrise.[2] It was in the beginning of the year and that of the spring in the kingdom of Bali (?). The Pratipad is to be taken always

1. Vratas are of different types. Some are to be performed on particular *tithis*, some on days, some depend on the constellation of the particular day etc. (AP. 175.I) AP later gives some general rules for observing Vratas.). Here Nārada wants to know the details of *Tithi-vratas*.

2. The belief that the Universe was created by god Brahmā at the time of sun-rise on the 1st day of the bright half of Caitra, is common to other Purāṇas. CC on Vrata, pp. 360-65, *Vrata-rāja* (VRJ.) ch. I., p. 21 quotes Bm. P and prescribes *Mahāśānti* and the worship of god Brahmā as in the NP.

when it is in conjunction with the previous Tithi, by wise persons.[1]

7. At that time, the great rite of Śānti (the pacificatory rite) should be performed. It is destructive of all sins. It subdues all evil portents. It dispels the sins of Kali.

8. It bestows longevity, causes nourishment and enhances wealth and good fortune. It is auspicious and holy and is conducive to happiness in both the worlds.

9-10. On that day, at the outset, god Brahmā who had assumed the physical body of the fire-god, should be worshipped with respectful formalities such as washing the feet with water and other respectful offerings (Pādyas, Arghyas), flowers, incense, clothes, ornaments, meals, sacrificial oblations, presents and the propitiation of the Brāhmaṇas. Thereafter, the worship of deities should be performed separately of each god.

11-12. After paying obeisance to the Oṁkāra with (the offerings of) water from the Kuśa grass, gingelly-seeds and raw rice-grains, (the devotee) shall give religious fee or gift (Dakṣiṇā) to a Brāhmaṇa who is a Vedic Scholar, alongwith clothes and gold for the purpose of complete and perfect performance of the Vrata. This Vrata that has such a special Pūjā in it, is called Saurī Vrata[2] (Vrata pertaining to the Sun).

13-14a. O Brāhmaṇa, this holy rite yields good health to men. O sage, Vidyāvrata[3] is also to be performed on that day. O sage, on the same Tithi, the holy rite called Tilaka[4] was told by Kṛṣṇa to Ajātaśatru (Yudhiṣṭhira).

14b-16. In the month of Jyeṣṭha, in the bright half, on the first day at sunrise, one should worship the pleasing Karavīra

1. VRJ. quotes this as *Vṛddha Vasiṣṭha Smṛti* and states that even if the *Pratipad* is associated with *amāvāsyā* (*pūrva-vṛddhā*), it should be taken as the proper beginning of the year.

2. Probably the same as *Ārogyapratipad vrata* (VRJ. I p, 23).

3. NP gives no details of this Vrata, for which *vide CC* on *Vrata* I. 338 40, VRJ. p. 23.

4. After worshipping Saṁvatsara (the year), the performer has to apply on his forehead a *Tilaka* with white sandal-wood paste for one year (CC on Vrata I. 348-50.

tree that grows in the temple garden.[1] It must be tied with a red thread, scents, incense and unguents must be offered alongwith the germinating seven grains, oranges and pomegranates. It must be sprinkled with water mixed with unbroken rice grain. The following Mantra should be uttered for praying for forgiveness.

17-19a. "Obeisance to you O Karavīra, the residence of meritorious acts, beloved of the sun, always liked by (one who wields thunderbolt Dambholi) i.e. Indra, Mṛḍa, (Śiva), Durgā and other deities." He should then crave forgiveness through the Vedic Mantra[2] "Ā Kṛṣṇena" etc. (ṚV. I. 35.2). After worshipping thus with great devotion and after giving due Dakṣiṇā to a Brāhmaṇa, he should circumambulate and go to his house.

19b-20. On the first day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, there is a great Vrata[3] that yields good fortune and intellect. It is the cause of all the Puruṣārthas) viz. virtue, wealth, love and liberation.

O Brāhmaṇa, beginning on a Monday, this Vrata should be continued for three and a half months.

21-22. After observing fast on the fourteenth day in the dark half of the month of Kārttika, the devotee, earnest and interested in the Vrata, should worship Śiva on (the following) full moon day. On the Pratipad following it He should offer Vāyana (sweet-meats and other presents) alongwith a gold flute (?) to a Brāhmaṇa for the purpose of increase in the wealth. O leading sage, it is highly meritorious and it increases the pleasure of the deities.

23. On the first day in the bright half of Bhādrapada, the Vrata named 'Mahātmā' (the greatest one) should be

1. VV 14-19a. describe the *Karavīra-pratipad-vrata* It is observed on *Vaiśākha Śuddha Pratipad* in Tamil Nad. Cf. CC. I. 353.

2. V. 17 which is a prayer in Purāṇic SK is said to be the 'Mantra' *ā Kṛṣṇena* etc. is a Vedic Mantra in RV. I. 35. 2.

3. VV 19b-22 describe the *Roṭaka Vrata,* although NP does not disclose the name of this *mahāvrata,* Vrj., pp. 25-26 describe it as *Roṭaka Vrata.* It is also called *Bilva-roṭaka vrata.*

performed. Some call this Vrata by the name of Mauna[1] (silence). Śiva is worshipped in this rite.

24-27a. The devotee shall, in silence, cook three times sixteen fruits alongwith ground flour. He shall give one set of sixteen to a Brāhmaṇa. He shall give another set of sixteen to the Deity. One set of sixteen, he himself eats. Over the water pot, the knower of the injunctions worships a gold image of Śiva and gives everything of it to the preceptor alongwith a cow. O Brāhmaṇa, after observing this Vrata of the trident-bearing Lord of the Devas for fourteen years, the devotee enjoys worldly pleasures, till his death (thereafter), he attains to Śiva.

27b-29. O Brāhmaṇa, a man who performs Aśokavrata[2] on the first day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina, (himself) becomes Aśoka (free from grief). He is endowed with riches and grains. The Aśoka tree must be worshipped by those who are exclusively devoted to these observances and rites. At the end of the Vrata in the twelfth year, he should offer the replica of an Aśoka tree with great devotion to the preceptor. He is thereby honoured in Śivaloka.

30. One shall begin Navarātra[3] (the festival of nine nights) on this very Pratipad. He should worship the goddess in the forenoon alongwith the rite of installing the water-pot.

31. He should sow to germinate barley grains mixed with wheat. He should take only one meal once a day. The food consumed should not be one that is requested for.

32-33. In accordance with his ability, he should observe fast. The worship of the goddess, repetition of the Mantras and recitation of the holy texts (the Saptaśatī) should also be done in accordance with one's capacity. O Brāhmaṇa, the three Caritas (stories) mentioned in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa should be read for all the nine days, by one who desires to get worldly

1. VV. 23-27a detail the *Mauna Vrata*. HD V. 383-384 gives a Vrata of a similar name but the details are somewhat different.

2. VV 27-29 describe *Aśoka-vrata*. This is different from that given in CC II. 279-283. HD V. i. 295 also differs.

3. VV. 30-34 describe the *Navarātra* or *Durgā Pūjā* which is observed all over India. It is described in details in HD V. i., pp. 154-187. The *Carita* in the *Mk. P.* mentioned in V. 32 is most probably *Devī Māhātmya* (chs. 78-90) or the *Saptaśatī*.

pleasures and salvation. The worship of virgins alongwith the rite of feeding, is praised.

34. O Brāhmaṇa, after performing the Vrata thus, the man becomes a receptacle of all Siddhis on the Earth, by the grace of Durgā.

35. On the first day in the bright half in the month of Urja (Kārttika), one should perform all the rites mentioned for Navarātra. Particularly, the rite called Annakūṭa[1] (a heap of cooked articles of food) causes the increase in the delight of Viṣṇu.

36. In the course of worship of Govardhana, Annakūṭa must be made with all cooked articles and with all milk products by everyone, for achieving all objects by the worshipper.

37. In the evening the devotee should worship Govardhana mountain alongwith the cows, and offer suitable Dakṣiṇā. He shall attain worldly pleasures and liberation.

38-40a. The excellent Dhanavrata[2] is to be performed on the first day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. Viṣṇu is to be worshipped at night alongwith Homas. The observer of the Vrata should give a replica in gold of the fire-god to a Brāhmaṇa after covering it with two red clothes. By performing this vrata thus, one becomes flourishing in wealth and food-grains on the Earth. With his sins burned in fire, he is honoured in the Viṣṇuloka.

1. VV. 35-37 describe the *Govardhana Pūjā* (in the memory of Kṛṣṇa's triumph over Indra) or *Annakūṭa*. Though v. 35 instructs "to perform all the rites mentioned for Navarātra," the essential difference is that the *Navarātra* is pertaining to Devi (Śākta) while Govardhana Pūjā is a strictly vegetarian Vaiṣṇava Vrata. Vrj. p. 33 quotes *Sanatkumāra Saṁhitā* to describe the procedure of worship of *Annakūṭa*. There are minor regional differences in performing the *Annakūṭapūjā*.

2. VV. 38-40a describe *Dhana-vrata* which is otherwise called *Dhanya-vrata* (AP. 167. 5-6) or *Dhanya pratipad Vrata*. CC I. 355-56 bases its description on the *Varāha Purāṇa* 56. 1-16 which is somewhat different from what is given here. HD. V. i. 320 lists a *Dhana-vrata* which begins on *Phālguna-Śuddha-Trayodaśī* and is concerned with Kubera and as such is different from the *Dhana-Vrata* in the NP.

40b-41a. On the first day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa, one should worship the Sun-god with devotion. The man must restrict his diet to one meal a day. Performing the Vrata thus, that mortal being shall attain the world of the Sun.

41b-42a. On the first day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, one shall worship the Fire god as Maheśvara himself, in accordance with the injunctions. He becomes rich and flourishing on the Earth.

42b-44a. On the first day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna, one should, with water, sprinkle Digambara (the naked Lord Śiva), the Lord of the Devas, all of whose limbs have turned grey due to dust. He should sprinkle the water all over his body. Indeed, god Maheśvara is delighted even with such secular rites and activities. On being worshipped with devotion, he grants his own Sāyujya (Salvation wherein the devotee becomes one with the Deity).

44b-46.[1] On the first day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, one shall worship Viṣṇu who sports in the Universe. He should worship in accordance with the injunctions. The man who observes the Vrata should feed the Brāhmaṇas. Similarly, on the first day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha, one shall worship Brahmā, the preceptor of the worlds. Thereat, accompanied by Viṣṇu, Brahmā the Lord of the chiefs of all worlds, grants identity with himself. The devotee shall then attain all the Siddhis.

47-48.[2] O excellent Brāhmaṇa, Vratas to be observed on the first day of the twelve months—Vratas bestowing worldly pleasures here and Liberation from Saṁsāra hereafter have been recounted to you. Brahmacarya (observance of celibacy) is laid down in all these Vratas. The diet during these Vratas is prescribed as Haviṣyānna (cooked rice soaked in ghee) as common to all.

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1. The last redactor of the NP seems to have rectified the missing *Vratas* on Vaiśākha Śukla 1st, by adding vv. 44b-46.

2. VV. 47-48 prescribe the general rules about observance of Vratas mentioned (vide AP. 175).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN

Exposition of Vratas to be observed on Dvitiyās (second Tithi in lunar fortnight)

Sanātana said :

1. O Brāhmaṇa, listen. I shall recount to you the Vratas of Dvitīyās (to be observed on the second day of the lunar fortnight). On observing them with devotion, a man is honoured in the Brahmaloka.

2-3a. On the second day in the bright half of the month of Caitra, the devotee should propitiate Brahmā alongwith his Śakti. He should eulogise the deity and propitiate him with Haviṣyānna (cooked rice soaked in ghee), scents and other things. He shall thus attain the benefit of all sacrifices. After realising all desires, he shall attain the region of the supreme spirit in the end.

3b-4a. O Brāhmaṇa, on this very day, others worship the rising crescent moon at the beginning of the night. They attain worldly pleasures and liberation.

4b-6. Or on this day, one shall devotedly worship the twin gods, Aśvins and offer gold and silver eyes to a Brāhmaṇa covering them with a pot filled with curd or ghee ? O leading Brāhmaṇa, by performing this Netravrata[1] for twelve years one becomes verily a king. He attains a comely form. He becomes valorous against the hosts of his enemies. He becomes interested in Dharma, and the chief of all kings.

7-8a. On the second day in the bright half of the month of Rādha (Vaiśākha), one shall worship Brahmā in the form of Viṣṇu in accordance with the injunction, over a pitcher containing seven kinds of grains. After enjoying all desirable worldly pleasures here one attains Viṣṇuloka thereby.

1. VV 4b-6 describe the *Netra-vrata* or *Cakṣu-vrata*. CC on *Vrata* I. 392-93 mentions that the *Vratin* (observer of the Vrata) is to subsist on curds and ghee on this tithi.

8b-9. On the second day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, one should worship the Sun-god, Lord of the worlds who has assumed the form of the four-faced Lord, in accordance with the injunctions. After feeding the Brāhmaṇas with devotion, he shall attain the world of Sun-God.

10-12. The second day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha is very meritorious. On that day, the observer of the Vrata takes Balarāma in procession alongwith Subhadrā. He goes round the various parts of the city, alongwith Brāhmaṇas and others. After going near a tank or a river, he should celebrate the great festival. At the end of it, he should re-instate them duly in the Lord's abode. He should feed Brāhmaṇas for completing the holy rite.

13. Prajāpati or the creator of the universe sleeps on the second day in the bright half of the month of Nabhas (Śrāvaṇa) That tithi is therefore very sacred. It is called Aśokaśayanā.[1]

14-16a. One should worship the four-faced deity lying in the bed alongwith his Śakti. After bowing down to the Lord of the worlds, one shall utter this Mantra : "O Śrīkānta (lover of Śrī) O Śrīvatsadhārin (one who bears the Śrīvatsa mark), Śrīvāsa (abode of good fortune), O Śrīpati (Lord of Śrī), O Dharmārtha-Kāmada (the bestower of virtue, wealth, and love) may not my wedded life perish." Here the charitable gift of a crescent made of gold is recommended. It brings about all Siddhis.

16b-17a. On the second day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapadā, one should worship the creator of the

1. VV. 13-15 describe the *Aśoka-Śayana-Vrata*, also called *Aśūnya-Śayana-Vrata*. It is meant for both men and women. NP prescribes the worship of the four-faced god Brahmā while he is lying in bed with his Śakti, in this *Vrata*. But in *Viṣṇudharmottara*. I. 145. 6-20 and AP. 177. 3-12 the worship of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī is prescribed. Strangely enough after worshipping Brahmā the prayer is addressed to Viṣṇu in the NP (v. 15); the name of the Vrata is based on the prayer.

Lakṣmyā na śūnyaṁ varada yathā te śayanaṁ vibho|
Śayyā mamāpyaśūnyā' stu tathaiva madhusūdana||

—AP. 177. 7b-8a.

It is to be observed for four months from Śrāvaṇa,

universe in the form of Indra in accordance with the prescribed injunctions. He shall obtain the fruit of the performance of all sacrifices.

17b-21.[1] The second day in the bright half of the month Āśvina is very holy. The charitable gift made on this day is said to yield endless benefits. Formerly, Yama was fed by Yamunā in her house on the second day in the bright half of Kārttika. Hence, this is called Yamadvitīyā.[1] If one takes food in the house of one's sister on this day, it is conducive to nourishment. He must give her clothes and ornaments. It is the tithi on which Lord Yamarāja was fed by Yamunā with her own hand, out of sisterly affection. Hence, he who takes his food from the hand of his sister on that day, attains excellent jewels, wealth and food-grains.

22. Pitṛs should be worshipped through Śrāddha on the second day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. Then the devotee obtains good health alongwith his sons and grandsons.

23-24. On the second day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa, the rite of sprinkling with the water a cow's horns, is the bestower of all desires unto men. The sight of the rising moon is also conducive to the attainment of all desires. For the purpose of achieving virtue, love and wealth, the devotee should restrict his diet to cooked rice soaked in ghee and subdue his sense-organs and worship the rising moon by offering Arghya and flowers alongwith ghee.

25-29a. On the second day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, one shall duly worship Prajāpati in the form of Sun, with red flowers and red unguents. He shall make an image of the deity in gold, according to his capacity. He should take a copper vessel full of wheat or rice grains. He should dedicate all these things to the Lord and offer the same to a Brāhmaṇa. If this Vrata is thus performed, the devotee shall

1. VV. 18b-21 describe the *Yama dvitīyā Vrata*. It was on the 2nd day of the bright half of Kārttika that Yama, the god of Death, was fed by his sister Yamunā that people are advised to go to their sisters on this day and take meal and gift her with clothes and ornaments. The story is told in *Bṛ*.

be like the rising sun. The man will be unapproachable and unthwartable in the world. After enjoying all excellent worldly pleasures here, he attains Brahmā's region in the end. He will be seated in an excellent aerial chariot, eulogised frequently by the Devas.

29b-31. An excellent Brāhmaṇa should worship Śiva with white and fragrant flowers on the second day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna. He should make a canopy and decorate it with flowers and ornamental fittings. He should propitiate the Lord with Naivedyas of various kinds. He should offer incense and lights. He should perform Nīrājana rite (waving of lights). Prostrating on the ground with eight limbs touching it, he shall make obeisance to the Lord.

32. Worshipping the Lord of the Devas thus, the man becomes free from all sickness. With plenty of wealth and food-grains, he shall certainly live for a hundred years.

33. The injunctions regarding the Dvitīyās of the bright half of the month should be followed in the case of those of the dark half of the month also, by the people clever in the matter of procedures.

34. It is the fire-god alone that is worshipped separately in the different months. He assumes different forms and so is worshipped on the Dvitīyās. The vow of celibacy etc. are to be observed as before.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE

Enumeration of Vratas to be observed on Tṛtiyās (third day of a lunar fortnight

Sanātana said :

1. O Nārada, listen. I shall recount to you the Vratas pertaining to Tṛtīyā (third day in the lunar fort-night). On

P. Uttara 14. 18-23. It is also known as *Bhrātṛ-dvitīyā* (*Bhaiyyā-dūja* and people make it a point to go to their sister's place and offer her some gift. *Vrj.* quotes *CC.* wherein the *Bṣ. P.* mentioned above is quoted. *Vrj.* quotes from the *Sanatkumāra Saṁhitā*, LP & Pd. P. in support of this *Vrata* which is an act of fraternal affection.

observing these Vratas perfectly, a woman shall attain married bliss and good fortune.

2-5. An unmarried virgin desirous of a bridegroom, and one desirous of matrimonial bliss and good fortune for her sons and husband, should perform Gaurī Vrata.[1] The image of Gaurī is made of gold, silver, copper or clay along with that of her Lord (Śiva) on the third day in the bright half of the month of Caitra. O Brāhmaṇa, she then worships it with scents, fragrant flowers, clothes, auspicious ornaments, and bundles of Dūrvā grass. She observes fast. She propitiates Brāhmaṇa women whose husbands and sons are alive and girls with auspicious characteristics, by offering them saffron, collyrium, clothes and other things. Delighted in her mind, she should keep awake that night with the desire to fulfil the Vrata.

6. O Brāhmaṇa, she should give that image to the preceptor if it is metallic. If it is made of clay, she should immerse it in a tank or a river.

7. She should perform this auspicious Gaurī Vrata for twelve years. With the due formal resolve to donate, she should offer twelve cows also for the achievement of her desires.

8. What more needs be spoken ? There is no other bestower of good fortune and matrimonial bliss to women in all the three worlds like Gaurī.

9. A woman attains wealth, good husband, sons, learning, ability to command, fame and happiness—in fact all desired happiness, by worshipping Gaurī with devotion.

1. VV. 2-9 describe the *Gaurī Vrata* which if observed for twelve years, confers a good consort to the lady observer if unmarried, uninterrupted matrimonial bliss, if married, good fortune and all desired happiness. *HD* V. i. p. 296 gives five varieties of this *Vrata* some of which are to be observed in Āśvina (*Kṛtyaratnākara* 219), on the 4th day of Jyeṣṭha (Bd. p). It is similar to *Gaurī-tṛtīyā-Vrata* observed on the 3rd day of the bright half of *Caitra, Bhādrapada, Māgha*—(*Samaya-mayūkha* 36).

There is another *Gaurī Vrata* to be observed on the 4th day in the bright half of Māgha. It is also called *Ḍhuṇḍhi Vrata, Kuṇḍa Vrata, Lalitā Vrata* and *Śānti Vrata, vide infra* I. 113. 80.85.

10. The third day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha is glorified as Akṣaya Tṛtīyā.[1] That is the Tithi on which Tretāyuga began. Whatever holy rite is performed on this day is made everlasting (Akṣaya) by this Tṛtīyā.

11-12a. Wise men know that two inaugural days of Yugas (viz. that of Kṛta and Tretā) were in the bright half of the month, while those of the other two Yugas (viz. Dvāpara and Kali) were in the dark fortnight (of the lunar month). The two (inaugural) days in the bright fortnight are to be accepted (observed) in the earlier half of the day. Out of the Yugādi days in the dark fortnight, Dvāpara began in Māgha while the Kali Age commenced in Bhādrapada. Thus commenced the Yugas[2] on these days.

12b-13. The devotee should worship Nārāyaṇa, the preceptor of the universe accompanied by Śrī, with flowers, incense and unguents on the third day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha. Or if he takes his holy dip in the waters of the Gaṅgā, he is absolved of all sins.

14. He should worship Viṣṇu with unbroken rice-grains. He shall have his ablution with water mixed with unbroken

1. VV 10-15 describe the *Akṣaya Tṛtīyā Vrata* which falls on the 3rd day of the bright half of Vaiśākha. Any meritorious act performed on this day, becomes ever-lasting. Hence the epithet *Akṣaya*. The speciality of this day is that it marks the beginning of the *Tretā Yuga*. The rite pertains to the worship etc. of god Viṣṇu accompanied by Śrī. The performer devotee attains the region of Viṣṇu. Cf. *Viṣṇu Dh. S.* 90. 16-17: also *Bhaviṣyottara* P. 30. 2-3 & 19.

2. VV 11-12a. give the Yugādi *tithis* vide *Supra I* 56. 147-48 for the *Yugādi Tithis*—the *tithi* on which a particular Yuga began. According to the NP. the following are the *Yugādi tithis* for the following Yugas.

	Yuga		*Tithi*
1.	Kṛta		9th day Kārttika, Śu. (bright half) (Śuddha)
2.	Tretā	—	3rd day Vaiśākha, Śu.
3.	Dvāpara	—	15th day of Māgha (Vd—Vadya—dark half)
4.	Kali	—	13th day of Bhādrapada, Vd.

VP. III. 14. 12-13 supports this, though AP. 209. 14 differs about Kṛta-Yuga.

As *Yugādi* days are recommended for the performance of *Śrāddha* etc., the first half of the day is preferable for *Yugādi* day in the bright half of a month, while the latter half is recommended for the Yugādi days in the dark half of the month.

rice grains. He should feed Brāhmaṇas with the flour of barley first fried and then ground. He himself shall partake of it.

15. O Brāhmaṇa, the man who performs the rites thus and who is devoted to Viṣṇu attains Viṣṇu's world. He is bowed to by all the Devas.

16. The third day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha is well known by the name Rambhā.[1] On that day, one should duly worship and honour an excellent Brāhmaṇa accompanied by his wife.

17-18a. With the desire for conjugal blessedness a woman should perform this holy rite and worship the Brāhmaṇa couple with scents, fragrant flowers, silken garments, etc. O Brāhmaṇa, if this holy Rambhā rite is duly observed, it yields wealth, sons, and auspicious inclination towards Dharma (virtuous and religious rites).

18b-21a. The lady who desires conjugal bliss should wear white clothes in the third day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha and worship Keśava accompanied by Lakṣmī symbolised or represented in a Brāhmaṇa accompanied by his wife. She should propitiate them with meals, charitable gifts of cows, clothes and ornaments and pleasing words. By observing this Vrata, the lady shall be blessed with wealth and food-grains. By the grace of the Lord of the Devas, she shall attain Viṣṇu's world.

21b. Svarṇa-Gaurī Vrata[2] is to be performed on the third day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa.

1. VV 16-18 mention *Rambhā Vrata* which consists of worship of a Brāhmaṇa couple. It yields wealth, sons and inclination to Dharma. The *Rambhā Vrata* mentioned in the *Bhaviṣyottara* P. 18. 1-36 and *CC* on *Vrata* I. 426-430 is different, as it recommends that worship of Devi, and *homa*, etc. are to be performed therein.

2. VV 21b-29 describe the *Svarṇa Gaurī Vrata* to be performed by ladies, on the 3rd day of Śrāvaṇa Śu. for the propitiation of goddess Gauri or Bhavāni. In Karnāṭaka it is observed on the 3rd day of Bhādrapada (Vrj. p. 45). Herein the number 16 is very significant. Goddess Gaurī is worshipped with 16 *upacāras* and prayed for conjugal blessedness, sons and wealth. The *Vrata* is to be observed for 16 years at the end of which a gold image of Gauri is to be worshipped, 16 wickerworks filled with 16 edibles are to be given to 16 couples of Brāhmaṇas and the gold image to be given to the

22a-23a. The lady devotee should worship goddess Bhavānī by means of the sixteen Upacāras (articles and modes of worship and service) with the Prayer—"O goddess of holy rites, obeisance be to you. Be pleased to grant me sons and wealth, grant me conjugal blessedness. Do bestow on me all other desired things."

23b-24a. After praying thus to Bhavānī the goddess of the Devas, accompanied by God Śiva, the lady devotee, desirous of completion of the holy rite should make the gift of sweet meats etc. to Brāhmaṇas.

24b-25a. After performing this auspicious Vrata for sixteen years, she should perform the concluding ceremony of the Vrata (Udyāpana) with great devotion. She should not exhibit stinginess in the matter of expenses.

25b-28. In a pandal in a pure Maṇḍala (mystic diagram) she should perform the worship of Gaṇeśa and other gods. She should then place a flat saucer-like copper-dish over the water pot and worship a gold-image of Bhavānī therein with scents and fragrant flowers. Thereafter, the Homa should be performed. Sixteen bamboo vessels (baskets) shall be filled with sweet dishes and cooked rice, offered to the Devī as Naivedya and distributed among Brāhmaṇas, kinsmen and relatives.

29. The woman interested in the observance of this Vrata shall attain the full benefit by giving the gold image to the preceptor and monetary gifts to the other Brāhmaṇas.

30. On the third day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada, the lady devotee should perform the Vrata of Haritālikā[1] with great devotion, in accordance with the in-

preceptor. The *Vrj.* quotes a story from the *Sk. P.* about this *Vrata.* The *Udyāpana* (concluding ceremony) of this Vrata agrees with that in the Sk. P. as quoted by *Vrj.*, pp 46-47.

1. VV 30-35 describe the *Haritālikā Vrata.* This is very popular in Maharashtra but not in Gujarat or Bengal. Only women are eligible for this and they observe a fast on this day and propitiate goddess Umā and Śiva. This Vrata is found in late mediaeval digests like the *Nirṇaya Sindhu* (p. 133). *Vrj.* pp. 48 quotes the story of Haritālikā from the *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa.* The *Udyāpana*-rite in the NP is similar to that in the

junctions, alongwith the rites of Pādya (viz. offering water for washing the feet, hands, worship) Arghya and Arcana.

31-32. Then the cooked rice and the Dakṣiṇā should be placed in a gold, silver, copper, bamboo or a clay vessel alongwith fruits and clothes. The same shall then be given to a Brāhmaṇa. At the end of it, she should have the Pāraṇā (break the fast) alongwith the kinsmen.

33. The woman who observes this holy rite shall enjoy all desirable pleasures. She shall become a friend and attendant of Gaurī, thanks to the efficacy of this Vrata.

34. Sixteen bamboo-baskets filled with bliss-yielding articles and clothes should be enthusiastically given to a Brāhmaṇa in accordance with the injunctions.

35-36. She should then give generous monetary gifts to the other excellent Brāhmaṇas also for the satisfaction of the goddess. The woman who performs this holy rite of Saubhāgya Vardhana (that which increases conjugal blessedness) certainly attains it, thanks to the grace of the Goddess.

37-38. When the Tṛtīyā in the month of Bhādrapada coincides with the constellation Hasta, the Vrata taught by Śauri (Kṛṣṇa ?) is called Hastagaurīvrata[1]. The Vrata called Koṭīśvarī and Lakṣeśvarī[2] has been proclaimed by Śiva the Pināka-bearing Lord. Its rules of procedure are being mentioned:

V*RJ*, pp. 48-52. Sixteen wicker-baskets containing 'bliss-yielding articles (indicating *Saubhāgya*—conjugal happiness) and cloth are to be given to Brāhmaṇas. This *Vrata* increases conjugal blessedness. The term *Saubhāgya Vardhana* here does not imply a new Vrata of that name. Dr. Kane in HD. V. 1., p. 456 mentions three *Saubhāgya Vratas* but they are quite different.

1. VV 37-39 describe *Hasta-Gaurī-Vrata* which is to be observed when the constellation *Hasta* coincides with the 3rd day of Bhādrapada Śu. . Kṛṣṇa has told this *Vrata*. The *Vratārka* requires contemplation of Gauri, Hara and Gaṇeśa in this *Vrata*, for 13 years and the *Udyāpana* (conclusion) of this *Vrata* in the 14th year (HD. V. i. p. 462).

2. VV 38-45a describe the *Koṭīśvarā* alias *Lakṣeśvarī Vrata* to be observed on the 3rd day of Bhādrapada Śu. (*Śuddha Pakṣa*—The bright half). It is called Lakṣeśvarī as a paste of one hundred thousand grains of rice or Sesame seeds is used to form the image of Pārvatī. Fast is to be observed on that day. *CC on Vrata* I. 459-461 quotes the *Sk. P.* for this *Vrata*. also vide HD. V-I. p. 290.

39. On this day, the Vrata has to be taken up for four years. O Nārada, every year it has to be performed alongwith the observance of fast.

40. Unbroken rice grains or gingelly seeds should be selected, O leading sage, to the extent of one hundred thousand. They should be cleaned and put in boiling water.

41. When the grains are cooked well, a splended image of the goddess should be made. It should be embellished with scented flowers and flower garlands.

42-44. Goddess Pārvatī should be installed therein and worshipped with great devotion, with scents, fragrant flowers, incense, lights and detailed Naivedya offerings and fruits. O Brāhmaṇa, she should bow to the goddess and crave forgiveness. Then she should immerse the image of the goddess in the middle of a water-tank. Dakṣiṇā is then offered to the Brāhmaṇas who are knowers of religious rites and procedures. She should then partake of her food the next day. Thus, O Brāhmaṇa, the Koṭi Lakṣeśvarī Vrata has been narrated to you.

45a. In the end she goes to the world of Gaurī, thanks to the power of this Vrata.

45b. On the third day in the bright half of the month of Iṣa (i.e. Āśvina), the lady devotee should perform BṛhadGaurī[1] Vrata.

46. O Nārada, this Vrata is to be performed for five years in accordance with the rules of procedure mentioned above. At the end, she should worship the main preceptor and other Brāhmaṇas with cash presents etc.

47-50. Five Suvāsinīs (married women whose husband are alive) should be worshipped as Haripriyās (beloveds of Hari) with clothes, ornaments, sandal paste, bodices, earrings and necklaces; five bamboo baskets are used and they are tied round

1. VV. 45 b-53 describe the *Bṛhad-Gaurī-Vrata* to be observed on the 3rd day of Āśvina Śu. (*Śuddha*) according, to NP., but on Bhādrapada Kṛ. (*Kṛṣṇa*) *Tṛtīyā* as per VRJ. In southern Maharashtra and in Karnataka, a plant *Dorlī* or *Riṅgaṇī* (in Marathi) is brought along with its roots, fruits and branches for worship. A thread is wound round the neck in the name of Gaurī. VRJ. (pp. 53-54) narrates the story about this *Vrata* from the *Bhaviṣyottara P.*

with threads. The baskets are filled with saffron, cumin-seeds, and bliss-yielding articles. Vāyanas (presents of sweet-meats) comprising of ground wheat flour, fresh Apūpa (baked pies), fruits etc. These must be given to the Suvāsinīs who also be fed. After giving as worshipful gift half the materials gathered as Vāyanas, she shall silently take her food. For the increase of the desired objects, a fruit (out of the gift) should be worn round the neck.

51. Getting up early in the morning, bedecked in ornaments and accompanied by her friends, she should go to a river to the accompaniment of songs and instrumental music. There Gaurī image is ritualistically bidden farewell to (into the river) with the prayer :

52. "O gentle lady, you had been invoked by me and worshipped duly (as per procedure), you may be pleased to go away at will, for granting me conjugal bliss".

53. After observing the holy rite, thus, O Brāhmaṇa, and after enjoying all worldly pleasures, thanks to the grace of the goddess, she shall attain Gaurī's world after death.

54-55. On the third day in the bright half of the month of Ūrja (Kārttika), she (the lady) should perform Viṣṇugaurī-vrata.[1] After worshipping the goddess worthy of being saluted by the whole world, with different modes of worship and services and after feeding the suvāsinī (a married woman with husband alive) who has been honoured duly with auspicious articles, she should bid farewell to the goddess after bowing to her, for obtaining the grace of satisfaction of Viṣṇugaurī.

56. On the third day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, a woman should perform the auspicious HaraGaurī Vrata[2] in accordance with the injunctions laid down before, in the above-mentioned Vrata and should worship Jagadambikā (Mother of the Universe).

57. As a result of the prowess of this Vrata, she shall enjoy all charming worldly pleasures. Attaining the world of the goddess, she rejoices with her.

1. VV. 54-55 briefly describes the *Vrata* called *Viṣṇu Gaurī.*
2. VV. 56-57 deal with *Hara-Gaurī Vrata.*

58-59a. On the third day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa, a woman should perform the Brahmagaurīvrata[1] in accordance with the injunctions laid down above. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, on being worshipped, BrahmaGaurī shall be delighted. Thanks to her grace, the lady devotee becomes associated with the goddess and rejoices herself.

59b-60. On the third day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, (goddess) Saubhāgya-Sundarī[2] should be worshipped in accordance with the rules of procedure mentioned before, by means of offering Arghya with coconuts. Delighted and rendered pleased by means of the Vrata, the goddess grants her own world.

61. The third day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna, is the bestower of family happiness. If the goddess is worshipped with scents, fragrant flowers etc., she shall be the bestower of all auspiciousness.

62. O sage, in all these Tṛtīyās (vratas on the third days of the lunar fortnight) the rules regarding the Pūjā of the goddess, the honour to the Brāhmaṇa, the charitable gifts, Homa and the ritualistic dismissal of the goddess are the same.

63. Thus the Vratas to be performed on Tṛtīyās have been narrated to you here. If observed with great devotion, they shall bestow all desirable objects cherished in mind.

1. VV. 58-59a describe *Brahma-Gaurī Vrata*. It will thus be seen that the *Gaurī Vratas* are the same but are associated with each member of the Trinity of gods and are performed on the 3rd days of lunar fortnights.

2. VV. 59b-60 describe the *Saubhāgya-Sundarī Vrata* (to propitiate goddess Umā, though the NP. is silent about the name of the deity). VRJ. prescribes its performance on Mārgaśirṣa or Māgha (Kr.) *Tṛtīyā*, especially when it is conjoined with the next (4th) *Tithi*, and not with the previous one. VRJ (pp. 54-47) quotes a long story from the *Bhaviṣyottara P.* glorifying this *Vrata*.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN

The Exposition of the holy rites to be performed on Caturthīs (the fourth day in the Lunar fortnight)

Sanātana said :

1. O Brāhmaṇa listen, I shall recount to you the holy vows and rites to be observed on Caturthī days.[1] On observing them, men and women shall attain their cherished desires.

2-3a. On the fourth day in the Lunar fortnight in the month of Caitra,[2], one should duly worship Gaṇapa (i.e. Gaṇeśa) in the form of Vāsudeva and offer gold as Dakṣiṇā to a Brāhmaṇa. He will be bowed to by the Devas (thereby), and then go to Viṣṇuloka.

3b-4. On the Caturthī day in the month of Vaiśākha, the devotee should pray to the deity called Saṁkarṣaṇa. By giving a conch-shell to imporant Brāhmaṇa householders, the knower of religious injunctions shall attain the world of Saṁkarṣaṇa and rejoice there for many Kalpas.

5. On the Caturthī day in the month of Jyeṣṭha the person should worship the deity in the form of Pradyumna. By giving fruits and roots to the herds (of cattle or beasts), he shall attain heaven.

1. Just as all the third days in the lunar fortnights are sacred to the goddess (in any form of the Trinity), the fourth days of the lunar fortnights are sacred to god Gaṇeśa. The *Vrata* gives special merit or fruit, if the 4th *Tithi* falls on Sunday or Tuesday. (VV. 90-91 below).

2. VV. 2-6 synthesize the *Catur-vyūha* doctrine of the Pāñcarātrins with a Śaiva god like Gaṇeśa, by identifying him with Viṣṇu. This is Vaiṣṇavization, as the NP. is a Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa, while in the *Kūrma P*, we find Pāśupatization of an originally Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa

The *Gaṇeśa Vyūha* accepts the names of the Pāñcarātrins.

Thus we find :

God Gaṇeśa to be worshipped on the 4th Tithi of :	*Name of the Vyūha*
1. Caitra	Vāsudeva
2. Vaiśākha	Saṅkarṣaṇa
3. Jyeṣṭha	Pradyumna
4. Āṣāḍha	Aniruddha

This *Vrata* is to be observed for 12 years.

6. On the Caturthī day in the month of Āṣāḍha, a man should worship Aniruddha. By giving pot-gourd-vessels to ascetics, he attains the cherished desires.

7. After performing these holy rites of the four Mūrtis for twelve years, the Udyāpana rite should be performed in accordance with the injunctions, by the devotee who wishes for the benefit thereof.

8. On the Caturthī day in the month of Jyeṣṭha, there is another Vrata viz. the excellent Satīvrata. By performing it, the devotee rejoices in the world of the mother of Gaṇapati on a par with him.

9-10. There is another auspicious Vrata on the Caturthī day in the month of Āṣāḍha, since it is the day on which Kalpa called Rathantara began. The man should worship Gaṇeśa duly with his mind sanctified by faith. He shall attain the benefit inaccessible even to the Devas and others.

11-17a. On the Caturthī day in the month of Śrāvaṇa, O sage, when the moon has risen, the devotee, the most excellent among the knowers of the procedure, should offer Arghya unto Gaṇeśa. He shall meditate on Lambodara (God Gaṇeśa), the three-eyed, four-armed deity who is red-complexioned, whose face beams with pleasure, and who is bedecked in different kinds of jewels and ornaments. He should worship him with all modes of services such as invocation, etc. He should offer Modaka (sweet meat) as Naivedya which gives pleasure to Gaṇeśa. After performing the Vrata thus, he shall partake of the Modakas. During the night, after the worship, he should gladly sleep on the bare ground. Thanks to the power of this Vrata, he shall obtain all desires cherished in his mind in this world, and (after death) shall attain the region of Gaṇeśa. In all the three worlds, there is no other Vrata like this. Hence, it must be observed with all (possible) efforts by one who wishes to attain all cherished desires.

17b-18a. O celestial sage, some wish that the holy rite called Dūrvāgaṇapativrata[1] should be performed on this very

1. VV. 17b-23 describe the *Dūrvā Gaṇapati Vrata.* VRJ (pp. 60 ff) states that it commences on the 4th day of Śrāvaṇa Śu. 4 or Kārttika Śu. 4, and quotes stories from the *Saura P.* and the SK.P. to glorify this

same day. I shall tell you the injunctions regarding its performance.

18b-23a. The devotee should make the image of Gaṇapati in gold and place it over a copper vessel after covering it with a red cloth. He should worship the (entire set) on the mystic diagram called Sarvatobhadra, with red flowers five kinds of leaves viz. Bilva, Apāmārga, Śamī, Dūrvā, and Haripriyā (i.e. Tulasī). With these leaves and other flowers he should perform worship. He shall offer fruits and sweetmeats as Naivedya. After that, O ascetic, with pleasure, he should offer the Arghya. Then, O sage, after praying to it, he should give the image of Vighneśa (gaṇeśa) alongwith the adjuncts to the preceptor who knows the rules of procedure. He should honour him befittingly and then give it to him. He should continue the Vrata for five years, after duly performing worship. After enjoying all pleasures here he will go to the world of Gaṇapati.

23b-27a. On the Caturthī day (in the dark half) of the month of Bhādrapada, is the holy rite called Bahulādhenuka. On this day, the deity cow is to be assiduously worshipped with scents, garlands, barley, and other things. After circumambulating the cow deity, he should offer charitable gifts, if he can afford. If he cannot afford it, he shall bow to it and set it free. He should continue the Vrata for five, ten or sixteen years. He shall then perform the Udyāpana rite and give a milch cow (as charitable gift). Thanks to the power of this Vrata, he shall enjoy all charming worldly pleasures, and duly honoured and greeted by groups of Devas, he shall attain Goloka (the world of cows).

27b-30. On the fourth day in the bright half (of the month of Bhādrapada) is the holy rite called Siddha-Vainayaka-[2]

Vrata. As per SK. P., the *Vrata* is to be observed from Śrāvaṇa Śu. 4 to Māgha Śu. 4. VRJ. gives two more varieties, one allowing its commencement on any *Śukla Caturthī* if it falls on a Sunday, and another prescribing 21 days duration from Śrāvaṇa Śu. 5 to Śrāvaṇa Kr. 10.

1. VV. 23b-27 describe *Bahulā-dhenuka Vrata* to be performed on Bhādrapada Kṛ. 4, the deity being the cow.

2. 27b-39 describe the *Siddha-Vināyaka Vrata* so popular as *Gaṇeśa Caturthī* in Maharashtra and other parts of India, though with some

vrata (or 'Siddhi-Vināyāka vrata). Through invocation and all other modes of service, the worship should be performed. Concentrating the mind, he should meditate on Siddhivināyaka. He should meditate on Lord Gaṇeśa as Ekadanta (single-tusked) Śūrpakarṇa (one with winnow-like ears), Gajavaktra (elephant-faced), Caturbhuja (four-armed), Pāśāṅkuśa-Dhara (one holding in his hand, a noose and a goad), the Lord resembling molten gold (in complexion). He should offer twentyone leaves uttering the twentyone names (one by one) with devotion. Listen to those names.

31-37. Śamī-leaf should be offered to Sumukha (the good-faced Deity), the Bhṛṅga-leaf to Gaṇādhīśa, the Bilva-leaf to the son of Umā, Dūrvā-grass to the elephant-faced God, Badarī to Lambodara (the big-bellied deity), Dhattūra to the son of Hara (Śiva), Tulasī-leaf to Śūrpakarṇa (God with ears like winnowing baskets) Śami-leaf to Vakra-tuṇḍa (God with a curved trunk), Apāmārga leaf to Guhāgraja (Elder brother of Kārttikeya), Bārhata leaves (those of brinjals) to Ekadanta (Single-tusked god), Sindūra (saffron) to Heramba, leaf of the fragrant plant called Patra to Caturhotra, the leaf of the Agastya tree which is pleasing to Sarveśvara (Lord of all).

He should them take up a pair of the leaves of Dūrvā grass along with scents, fragrant flowers and unbroken rice-grains. With great devotion, he should offer worship and five Modakas as Naivedya. After the rite of Ācamana, obeisance and prayer, he should ritualistically bid farewell to the Deity.

O sage, he should give the image of Vināyaka, made of gold, to the preceptor along with adjuncts. He should then

different procedure than that given in the NP. VRJ (pp. 68 ff) quotes SK. P. from Hemādri (*CC-Vrata* 1.525-29). A strange restriction is that one should not look at the moon on this night, lest one should be accused of theft. It was due to this that Lord Kṛṣṇa was accused of stealing away Syamantaka jewel. If, however, one happens to catch a glimpse of the moon, he should repeat Verse No. 39 given below in the NP. recounting the Syamantaka episode. This verse is quoted from VP. IV. 13.42 and is found in the *Vāyu P.* 96. 42 and the *BR.P.* 16.36 referring to the same story.

give Dakṣiṇā (religious gifts) to Brāhmaṇas. O Nārada, one who performs worship with devotion like this for five years, shall attain all cherished desires as a result of his Upāsanā (devotion and worship) here, as well as all splendid things hereafter.

38-39. Never shall one look at the moon on this Caturthī day (i.e. night). There is no doubt about this that, if one looks at the moon, he will be falsely accused. In order to mitigate the defect thereof (i.e. of looking at the moon this night), this (following) Mantra from the Purāṇa* should be recited :

"The lion killed Prasena, the lion was killed by Jāmbavān. O gentle boy, Do not cry. This Syamantaka jewel is offered to you."

40-43a. On the Caturthī day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina, one should worship Vināyaka (Kapardīśa—the god with cowrie-like knotted hair) by means of the Puruṣa Sūkta. He should render services without any reason (i.e. without any ulterior motive). He should offer the rice grains alongwith the shell-coins to a Brāhmaṇa religious student who is worshipped with scents and fragrant flowers with prayer : "The rice grains have Viśve Devas as their deity. They are mixed with the shell coins whose presiding deity is Hara. May the leader of the Gaṇas of Śiva (Kapardin) be pleased, when (the couries) are so dedicated."

43b-44a. The holy rite called Karakavrata[1] is to be performed on the Caturthī day in the dark half of the month of Kārttika. Only women are authorised to perform this Vrata. The rules of the procedure on it are being mentioned.

*Like other material, the NP. seems to have borrowed this verse from the VP. IV. 13.42. The verse appears in a similar context in the *Vāyu P.* 96. 42 and Br. P. 16.36

1. VV. 43b-51a describe the *Karaka Vrata. Karaka* is a water-vessel for ascetics, (some times made of coconut shell also). Only women are eligible to observe this. It is to be performed on Kārttika Kṛ. Caturthī (Āśvina by *amānta* reckoning followed in VRJ., pp. 81-82 which quotes the *Vāmana* P. for its details). VRJ. (pp. 79) narrates a Daśa-*ratha Lalitā Vrata* on the same day, but does not mix up the two as is done in *Puruṣārtha Cintāmaṇi*. The NP. does not mention the picture of Gaurī (and her family) as the main deity but treats it as a *Gaṇeśa Vrata*.

44b-45. The woman should take her bath and bedeck herself. She should then worship god Gaṇeśa. In front of the deity ten bowls filled with cooked rice shall be kept and be dedicated to the Lord of the Devas with devotion and purity of the mind.

46-47. She should utter (pray) :—"May the deity be gracious unto me." Saying this she should dedicate them to God Gaṇeśa. Presents shall be given respectfully to Suvāsinīs (married women) and the Brāhmaṇas according to desire. Then at night, when the moon rises, she should duly offer Arghya and partake of sweet-meats and cooked rice for the fulfilment of the Vrata.

48. Or O sage, the bowls may be filled with milk or water alongwith a rice, a betel nut, rice-grains and jewels and gifted over to a Brāhmaṇa.

49. The woman devotee should perform this holy rite for sixteen or twelve years. After making the due presents, she should ritualistically conclude this Vrata.

50-51a. Or the holy rite shall be observed by the woman throughout her life with a desire for conjugal blessedness. There is no other Vrata like this that yields conjugal blessedness to women. Hence it should be continuously performed.

51b-53. On the fourth day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, the holy rite Nāgavrata[1] is to be celebrated. The devotee shall perform the Saṁkalpa rite in the morning, and drink pure water from a cow's horn. After the bath, he shall worship the serpents Śaṅkhapāla and others as well as Śeṣa by means of diverse services (in worship) beginning with invocation. He should make Āpyāyana (developing and nourishing) by means of milk. This is known as Nāgavrata.

54. O leading Brāhmaṇa, if this auspicious observance of Nāgavrata is performed thus by men, poisons perish ere long, and serpents do not bite them.

55-59. O leading sage, this Vrata is to be celebrated on the fourth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa.

1. VV. 51b-54 deal with the *Nāgavrata*. *CC-Vrata* I. 530 quotes this from the KP.

The full extent of the holy observance is for a period of four years, beginning with this Caturthī day. He must spend the first year, taking only a single meal per day. He must spend the second year by taking meal only at night every day. He shall spend the third year by taking in only the food obtained without solicitation. He shall spend the fourth year also similarly. If no food is offered, he observes a fast. After completing the vrata at the end of the fourth year, he should perform the rite of ablution. He is then a Mahāvratin (a man of great Vratas). He shall then make the replica of the 'mouse-chariot' of Vighneśvara (i.e. god Gaṇeśa) made of gold. If he cannot afford this, he should make the mystic diagram of a lotus with good petals, by means of colours. The jar is placed over it alongwith a copper vessel, that is filled with raw rice-grains. Image of Gaṇeśvara (i.e. Gaṇeśa) is placed over it covered with two clothes. The devotee should worship the deity with scents and other things.

60-61. Modaka is to be offered as Naivedya saying : "May Gaṇeśa be pleased." The night shall be spent by keeping awake through songs and instrumental music as well as in the narration of the Purāṇas. After the day has dawned, he should take bath and perform Homa in accordance with injunctions, with gingelly seeds, rice grains, barley grains and white mustard along with ghee and sugar-candy.

62-64. The following sixteen names of the deity should be uttered in the dative case. Om is prefixed to them and Namaḥ is added at the end. (For example, here the 1st name is Gaṇa. It should be uttered and addressed as : Om Gaṇāya namaḥ).

The names of the god are : Gaṇa, Gaṇādhipa, Kūṣmāṇḍa, Tripurāntaka, Lambodara, Ekadanta, Rukma-daṁṣṭra, Vighnahā, Brahmā, Yama, Varuṇa, Soma, Sūrya, Hutāśana, Gandhamādin and Parameṣṭhin.

With the utterance of each name, one oblation is offered into the fire. A hundred and eight Homas are performed with the utterance of 'Vakra-tuṇḍa' and 'Varman' in the dative case (i.e. Vakra-tuṇḍāya and Varmaṇe.

65-66. Thereafter, he performs Homas with Vyāhṛtis to the extent of his capacity and then the Pūrṇāhuti is performed. After worshipping the guardians of the quarters, he should

feed Brāhmaṇas (twenty-four in number) with sweet-meats and milk-pudding. He should then give a cow along with its calf to the preceptor, along with monetary gifts.

67-69a. He shall give cash presents to others also, according to his capacity (the more the better). After obeisance and circumambulation (around the Brāhmaṇas), the excellent Brāhmaṇas should be bidden farewell to. He should, then, with great delight in his mind, take his food along with his kinsmen. By performing this vrata, a man enjoys excellent worldly pleasures here, and attains the Liberation called Sāyujya (absorption in the Deity) with Viṣṇu, thanks to the Grace of Gaṇeśa.

69b-70a. O Nārada, some call this by the name Varavrata.[1] Its rules of procedure and benefit are the same as in the case of the former.

70b-71. On the Caturthī day in the month of Pauṣa, the devotee should pray to Vighneśa with great devotion. He should feed a single Brāhmaṇa with sweet-meats and offer monetary gifts also. O sage, if this is performed, the Vratin (the performer of the holy vow) shall become the recepient of riches.

72-73a. The holy vow Saṁkaṣṭavrata[2] is to be observed on the fourth day in the dark half of the month of Māgha. The Vratin should decide on observance of fast upto the rise of the moon, with his mind controlled.

73b-74a. After the rise of the moon, the image of Gaṇeśa, made of clay, should be placed on the pedestal alongwith his weapons and the vehicle.

74b-75. It should be worshipped with the sixteen Upacāras (modes of service) in accordance with injunctions. Modaka and ground gingelly seeds alongwith jaggery shall be offered as Naivedya. Arghya is offered in a copper vessel mixed with red-sandal paste.

1. VV. 55-70 describe the *Mahāvrata* or *Vara-Caturthī* (in the SK.P., *vide CC-Vrata*, I. 530-31). The observer gets *Sāyujya* (identity) with Viṣṇu by observing this Gaṇeśa *Vrata*--a Vaiṣṇavite tilt.

2. VV. 72-79 prescribe the *Saṁkaṣṭavrata* on the 4th day in Māgha Kr., but it is observed every month on Kṛ. 4 in Maharashtra. VRJ. (pp. 82-88) calls it *Saṁkaṣṭa-hara Gaṇapati Vrata* (a Gaṇeśa *Vrata* destroying extreme calamities) and attributes the illustrative story to *Nārada* P.

76-78. Kuśa grass, Dūrvā grass, flowers, raw rice grains, Śamīpatra (leaves of the Śamī tree) and curds should be mixed together and offered to the Moon (with the prayer), "O moon, the ruby in the ocean of the firmament, O Lord of Dakṣa's daughters, O representative of Gaṇeśa, kindly accept the Arghya offered by me." Uttering this he should offer the divine Arghya, that is destructive of sins to Gaṇeśa. After feeding excellent Brāhmaṇas in accordance with his capacity, he should take food himself with their formal permission.

79. O Brāhmaṇa, by performing this auspicious Vrata called Saṁkaṣṭa, he shall become flourishing with wealth and foodgrains. He shall never attain difficulty or pain.

80-82. The excellent holy vow Gaurīvrata[1] is to be observed on the fourth day in the bright half of the month of Māgha. On that day, Gaurī is to be worshipped alongwith the groups of Yoginīs by men as well as by women in particular. The articles of worship are the following : Kunda flowers, Kumkuma, red threads, red flowers, Alaktaka (the juice of red lac), incense, lights, oblations, ginger with jaggery, milk and milk puddings, salt and the greens called Pālakas.

83. Married women who are not widows and splendid Brāhmaṇas are to be worshipped for the increase in conjugal bliss. Gifts must be made. One shall take food alongwith kinsmen.

84. O Brāhmaṇa, this Gaurīvrata is conducive to the increase of conjugal blesssedness. This must be performed every year both by men and women.

85. The same holy rite is called Dhuṇḍhivrata by others. By some it is called as Kuṇḍavrata. Others call it Lalitāvrata and still others call it Śāntivrata.

1. VV. 80-86 describe the *Gaurī* alias *Ḍhuṇḍhi* or *Lalitā* or *Śānti Vrata*. Though observed on Magha Śu. 4, it is essentially a *Devī Vrata*, not directly connected with Gaṇeśa, though the NP. attributes its fruits to the Grace of Gaṇeśa. In VRJ. (p. 82), it is called *Gaurī Caturthī Vrata* and VRJ. quotes from *Brahma P.* from *CC—Vrata* I. 531.

86. Ablution, charitable gift, japa and homa, O sage, all these rites performed on this day shall become thousandfold, thanks to the Grace of Dantin (god Gaṇeśa).

87. On the fourth day in the month of Phālguna falls the auspicious Vrata of Dhuṇḍhirāja. Brāhmaṇas are fed with cakes of ground gingelly-seed flour. The vower should also partake of it himself.

88. One who is interested in the propitiation of Gaṇeśa shall attain Siddhi by offering religious gifts, Homa and Pūjā with gingelly seeds alone, thanks to His grace.

89. The image of the elephant-faced deity should be made of gold. After worshipping assiduously, it must be given to an excellent Brāhmaṇa, for the flourishing increase in all riches.

90. If a Caturthī day coincides with Sunday or Tuesday in any of the twelve months, O leading Brāhmaṇa, it yields special benefits.

91. In all the Caturthīs, whether of the dark half or of the bright half of the month, Vighneśa (God Gaṇeśa), the Lord of the Devas should be worshipped by those who are eagerly engaged in devotion."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN

The Exposition of Holy Vratas to be performed on Pañcamī days (fifth days of Lunar fortnight)

Sanātana said :

1. O Brāhmaṇa, I shall recount to you the Vratas to be performed on Pañcamīs[1] (fifth days in the halves of Lunar months). On observing these rites with devotion, one shall attain all cherished desires.

1. Just as *Caturthī Vratas* are mainly concerned with god Gaṇeśa, *Vratas* on the 5th days of lunar fortnights are auspicious for the worship of

2. The Pañcamī (fifth day) in the bright half of the month of Caitra is called Matsya jayantī. On this day, the worship of the incarnation of the Lord as (Divine) Fish is to be performed with great festivities, by devotees.

3-4a. This is called Śrīpañcamī[1] also. On this day, the worship of Śrī is to be performed by the articles of worship such as scents etc., and the Naivedyas of milk pudding etc., Lakṣmī never forsakes a person who worships Lakṣmī here (on this day).

4b-5a. Pṛthvīvrata, Cāndravrata and Hayagrīvavrata are also to be performed by those who wish to attain different Siddhis, in accordance with the respective injunctions.

5b-6a. On the Pañcamī day in the month of Vaiśākha, the man shall worship Śeṣa, endowed with the attributes of serpents. He shall attain the desired benefit.

6b-7a. The intelligent devottee shall worship the Pitṛs (Manes) on the Pañcamī day in the month of Jyeṣṭha. He shall have the acquisition of all desired benefits through feeding the Brāhmaṇas.

7b-11a. O sage, Vāyu who is present everywhere is to be worshipped on the Pañcamī day in the month of Āṣāḍha. He should go out of the village and climb up to the ridge of a mountain. To a bamboo pole he should tie a banner of five colours. It should be succintly high. He should fix the pole in the middle of the mystic diagram of a lotus. O Nārada, at its root in all the quarters, he should worship the guardians of the quarters and test the direction of the blow of the wind. Beginning with the first Yāma, (period of three hours), he shall duly worship the Lord of that quarter in which the wind blows.

serpents (NP. verse 61 below), though worship of Sages (*Ṛsi-pañcamī*) in VV. 34b-48, and of goddess Lalitā (*Lalitā Pañcamī* VV. 49-53) is also given importance in the NP.

1. There are a number of days (e.g. Mārgaśirṣa Śu. 5, Māgha Śu. 5) on which a *Śrī Pañcamī Vrata* is prescribed. The *Śrī Vrata* described in the NP. is mentioned in the *Smṛti Kaustubha* 92. VRJ. is silent about it. On this day (Caitra Śu, 5) *Vratas* called *Pṛthvī, Cāndra* and *Hayagrīva* are also observed.

11b. He shall thus stay there for four Yāmas without taking food.

12. He should then return home in the evening. He should partake light food. With concentration of mind and after bowing down to the guardians of the world, he should lie down on bare yet clean ground and go to sleep.

13. The dream that comes to him in the fourth Yāma (quarter) on that night shall come true. So says Śiva.

14. If anything inauspicious happens in the dream, the devotee should be engaged in the worship of Śiva and observe fast for all the eight subsequent Yāmas (i.e. 24 hours) or for the day alone (i.e. 12 hours).

15-16a. He should then feed eight Brāhmaṇas. Thereby he shall attain auspicious benefits. This holy rite is called "Śubhāśubha-Nidarśana"[1] (The test for auspicious and inauspicious results). It causes blessedness to men in this world as well as in other world.

16b. The auspicious rite called Anna-samrddhi-da[2] (the bestower of plentitude of food) is to be observed on the Pañcamī day in the dark half of the month of Śrāvaṇa.

17-19. O Nārada, on the previous Caturthī day when there is yet some part of the day, the intelligent devotee shall put all cooked food in different vessels and pour water therein. Then he should put it in another vessel after draining off all water. The next day, after sunrise, he should worship the Pitṛs, the sages and the Devas after due ablution. He should then offer Naivedya to the Devas. With delighted mind, he shall give cooked food to beggars.

1. VV. 7b-16a describe a peculiar *Vrata* leading to veridical or prognosticating dreams or omens by worshipping the wind-god. No primitive Meteorology should be read in the prescription of setting up a flag on a hill-top and notice the direction of the wind per three-hour period and worship the wind-god according to its direction of blowing.

2. VV. 16b-26b deal wtth a *Vrata* giving abundance of food in every birth and aptly called *Anna-samṛddhi-Vrata* or briefly as *Anna*. The NP. prescribes this Śaiva Vrata as goddess Annapūrṇā is Pārvatī, the spouse of Śiva. Kane (HD.V. i) does not mention it. It is probably an original contribution of the NP. to *Vratas*.

20. He shall spend the whole of the day in this activity. At sunset he shall go to Śiva's temple and worship the Lord Īśvara in the form of Liṅga.

21. After duly worshipping Maheśvara with scents, fragrant flowers, etc he shall repeat the five-syllabled Mantra (Oṁ Śivāya Namaḥ) a hundred or thousand times.

22-23a. After dedicating the benefit of Japa to Lord Śiva, the embodiment of the universe, he should eulogise the Lord with all Vedic and Paurāṇic hymns. Without agitation or perturbation, he should pray to Lord Īśāna for the sake of perpetual acquisition of cooked food.

23b-24a. "In all my births may I be richly blessed with all those foodgrains whether harvested during the autumn or during the spring."

24b-26. After praying thus to the Lord of the Devas, he should come back to his own house. He should give cooked food to the Brāhmaṇas and eat it himself silently. O Brāhmaṇa, this Annavrata (Holy rite of cooked food), if observed duly by men, is conducive to the production of all food and wealth in this world, and yields salvation in the other world.

27-29. This rite (in propitiation of serpents) is performed on the fifth day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, by men firm in their belief in the Vedas. On either side of the door-way, figures of poisonous serpents should be drawn in cowdung. He should worship them with scents, etc. Thereafter he should worship Indrāṇī with gold, silver, etc, curds, raw rice-grains, water from Kuśa grass, scents, fragrant flowers, incense, lights and hoards of Naivedyas. After circumambulating and bowing down, he should pray with great devotion. He should give the articles of worship to leading Brāhmaṇas.

30. "In all my births, may these gold, silver, etc. that have been given to Brāhmaṇas be productive of endless benefit."

31. O Nārada, he who gifts away along with this utterance, the articles with great devotion, will delight Kubera, the presiding deity of wealth, who bestows affluence like gold, upon his devotees.

32. After observing the holy rite, the man should feed

Brāhmaṇas with devotion. Thereafter, he should partake of his food surrounded by his wife, children and friends.

33-34a. The devotee should propitiate serpents with milk on the fifth day in the dark half of the month of Bhādrapada, (thereby) the entire family upto the seventh generation shall be free from the fear of serpents.

34b. One should worship the excellent sages[1] on the fifth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada.

35.37a. In the morning, he should take his bath in the river etc. and perform Nitya rites, Sandhyā prayers etc. He should then return home and make a platform with clay. He should smear and clean it with cowdung and decorate it with flowers. O Brāhmaṇa, he should then strew Kuśa grass thereon and worship the seven sages, by means of scents, different flowers, incense and splendid lights.

37b-39. The sages are Kaśyaḷ a, Atri, Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Vasiṣṭha. Arghya should be duly offered to these. The intelligent devotee should cook

1. This is the well-known *Ṛṣi-pañcamī Vrata*. The NP. records an early stage when this *Vrata* was performed both by men and women. Later on it came to be regarded as efficacious in warding off sin in 'polluting' things with their touch by women in their menses, as monthly course or menstruation came to be regarded as part of the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter (*Brahmahatyā*) committed by Indra in killing Vṛtra. Naturally women (especially in Maharashtra) begin to perform it after attaining puberty. VRJ. (pp. 91-96) records a story from the *Bhaviṣyottara P.* how the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter perpetrated by Indra (in killing Vṛtra) came to be equally distributed in Fire, rivers, mountains and women (viz. the menstruation of women) to expiate which women should observe this *Vrata*.

VRJ-also quotes *CC-Vrata* I. 568-572 which records the account of this *Vrata* according to the *Brahmāṇḍa P.* There are some differences in the details of the worship as given in the NP. and other works (for example non-inclusion of Arundhati in seven sages in the NP.), prescription of this *Vrata* even to men. *Vratārka* and VRJ. specifically assert that this *Vrata* is to be observed by women only to ward off the sin of 'polluting' things by their touch during their monthly course.

The prescription to eat food that is naturally grown without ploughing the field in this *Vrata* shows that it belongs to the period of food-gathering economy. This explains why men and women were eligible for this *Vrata* in the older stage.

Śyāmāka and other grains that have not been cultivated, as Naivedya. After the food offerings, he should ritualistically bid farewell to them and eat the same cooked grains himself.

40-41. In this manner, he should perform this holy rite every year, for seven years. At the conclusion of the Vrata, he should choose seven Vedic scholars as his Ācāryas (preceptors). He should make seven images in gold, according to his capacity. They must have matted hair, rosary and water pot.

42. These images should be placed in copper vessels or clay pots and the rite of ablution is performed severally with Pañcāmṛta.

43-44. With sixteen types of services and articles of worship, they are worshipped with devotion. Arghya is offered then, and the homa is performed with gingelly seeds, grains, or barley grains etc. The Ṛk. 'Sahastomā' (ṚV X.130.7) should be used while performing homa or the names of the sages shall themselves be the Mantras. Or with other holy mantras also the homa can be performed. Then the Pūrṇāhuti is offered.

45-46. He should then give seven cows as gifts, fully bedecked in ornaments and clothes. He should worship his preceptor also with clothes, ornaments, etc. With the permission of the preceptor, he should thereafter dedicate the images unto the Brāhmaṇas. After feeding them with devotion, he should bow down to them and bid them farewell.

47. Thereafter, the food left over by the Brāhmaṇas consisting of articles of six different tastes should be taken by him along with kinsmen.

48. After performing this holy rite with its ancillaries he shall enjoy all desired worldly pleasures, thanks to the grace of seven sages. He shall go hence in an excellent aerial car.

49-52. On the fifth day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina, the holy rite of Upāṅga-Lalitā-Vrata[1] is to be observed.

1. VV. 49-52 briefly describe *Upāṅga-Lalitā-Vrata* popularly known in Maharashtra as *Lalitā Pañcamī*. The detailed procedure of this *Vrata* as observed in the Deccan is given in VRJ. (pp. 97-103) and the story about

O Nārada, the image of the goddess should be made in gold in accordance with one's ability. The devotee should worship her in accordance with the injunctions, with all the sixteen types of services. In order to make the Vrata perfect and complete, cooked rice alongwith fruits, ghee and monetary gifts should be given to an excellent Brāhmaṇa— "The boon-granting deity accompanied by Śakti has been worshipped by me alongwith her vehicle. O Mother, you may be pleased to go to your own abode after blessing me" (The foregoing is the final prayer).

53. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the holy rite of the excellent Jayā vrata is to be observed on the fifth day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika with good faith, for the destruction of sins.

54-55. O Brāhmaṇa, the devotee should, with great concentration, worship Jayā according to injunction. Clean (in body and mind) and bedecked in ornaments, he should worship her with sixteen types of services. He should feed a single Brāhmaṇa and give him monetary gifts. Then he should bid farewell to him and himself partake of his food silently.

56. If any one takes his holy dip on the day of Jayā, with great devotion, all his sins perish like dear attacked by a lion.

57. O Brāhmaṇa, the fruit that has been glorified as the result of the Avabhṛtha (concluding) bath in a horse sacrifice, is attained by bath on the day of Jayā.

58. One devoid of sons gets a son, a barren woman becomes pregnant, a sick man is freed from ailments and a prisoner is released from bondage.

59. By worshipping serpents duly on the fifth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa one attains fearlessness from serpents and rejoices alongwith the kinsmen.

60. In the month of Pauṣa too, on the fifth day in the bright half, one attains all cherished desires by worshipping Madhusūdana. No doubt need be entertained in this matter.

its importance is quoted from the SK. P. It is probably a later development.

For *Lalitā-Ṣaṣṭhī Vrata* vide *infra* Ch. 115.8-29.

61. O Nārada, the worship of the Pitṛs and the serpents on the fifth day in the bright or dark half of any month is recommended in every respect.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN

The Exposition of the holy vows to be observed on Saṣṭhi (sixth) days (in lunar fortnights)

Sanātana said :

1. O Brāhmaṇa, listen. I shall recount to you the holy rites to be observed on Ṣaṣṭhī days[1] (sixth day in the lunar fortnight). On observing them perfectly, one shall obtain all cherished desires.

2-3a. On the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Caitra, the excellent holy rite of Kumāra Vrata is to be observed. By worshipping the six-faced Lord on that day in accordance with the different injunctions of worship, one shall attain a son who is endowed with all good qualities and who will live for a long time.

3b-4a. On the sixth day, in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, the devotee should worship Kārttika (Skanda). By doing so, one attains motherly affection and happiness. No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

4b-5a. By duly worshipping Divākara (the Sun) on the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, one attains all desired benefits, thanks to his Grace. There is no doubt about this.

1. It is noteworthy that most of the sixth days in lunar fortnights are sacred to god Skanda and most of the *Vratas* have Skanda as the presiding deity, the main exception being *Lalita Ṣaṣṭhī* and *Kapilā Ṣaṣṭhī*.

5b-6. The excellent holy rite of Skanda is to be observed on the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha. The devotee should observe fast and then worship the beloved son of Śiva and Umā. He attains all cherished desires and the continuation of the line of sons and grandsons.

7-8a. On the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, the devotee, endowed with great devotion, should worship Śarajanman (i. e. Kārttikeya) with the sixteen Upacāras (types of services). Thanks to the grace of the six-faced Lord, he attains all desired objects.

8b-10. The holy vow that has to be observed on the sixth day in the month of Bhādrapada, the Lalitā Vrata[1] is being recounted. A woman devotee should take morning bath duly on that day. She should wear white cloth and white garlands. She should take the sand from the confluence of a river, in a bamboo basket. She should then make five lumps of the sandy soil and meditate on goddess Lalitā, the sportive lady of the forest.

11-12. She should then take one hundred and eight flowers of each of lotus, Karavīra Nepālī, Jasmine, blue lotus, Ketakī and Tagara and twentyeight unbroken buds. With these she should worship the goddess.

13-15. Sitting in front of the goddess, the beloved wife of Śiva, she should pray as follows : "By taking bath in Kanakhala, on the mountain Nīlaparvata, in the Kuśāvarta, in the Gaṅgādvāra and in the Bilvaka you obtained Hara as husband. O blessed goddess Lalitā, the bestower of happiness and conjugal blessedness, grant unto me endless blessedness. Obeisance, unto you again and again." Uttering this Mantra, she should worship the goddess with splendid Campaka flowers duly. She should then place the Naivedya in front of the goddess.

16-20. The Naivedya should consist of Trapuṣa (a kind of fruit) Kūṣmāṇḍa (gourd), coconut, excellent pomegranates, Tuṇḍīra, Kāravella (the gourd Momordica charantia), Cirbhaṭa

1. VV. 8b-29a describe the *Lalitā Ṣaṣṭhī Vrata*. VRJ. (pp. 103-104) quotes *Bhaviṣyottara* P. from *CC. Vrata* I. 617-620). It is popular in Gujarat according to VRJ.

(a sort of cucumber) and other seasonal fruits taken fresh. The surroundings of the image of the goddess should be beautified with rows of excellent lights and germinating food grains. There should be incense of Sargaṇaka (?) alongwith Sauhālakha and Karañjaka (?). Guḍapuṣpa (Bassia latifilia) should be placed as ornament of the cars. According to one's affluence, sweetmeats of large and small varieties of various kinds should be used as Naivedya. After worship, she should celebrate the festival of keeping awake with songs and instrumental music, as well as dances and other scenic items of various types. The chaste lady should spend the whole of that night with her female friends.

21-26a. The woman devotee shall not close her eyes throughout the four Yāmas (yāma—3 hours) (of the night). By closing her eyes, she will become sinful, barren and unhappy. After keeping awake thus, she should take (everything) to a river on the Saptamī day (i. e. seventh day) to the accompaniment of songs and instrumental music. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, she should give that Naivedya etc. to a leading Brāhmaṇa. After taking her bath, she should return home and get the Homa performed in the fire. The Devas, Pitṛs and human beings (i. e. guests) shall be worshipped. She should worship and feed married women, virgins and fifteen Brāhmaṇas with various kinds of foodstuffs and edibles. She should give them various charitable gifts as well. Saying "May Lalitā be pleased with me", she should bid farewell to them.

26b-29a. Listen to the merit of this Vrata that bestows conjugal blessedness whether performed by a man or a woman. O Nārada, of what avail is much talk ? That benefit which one desires by means of holy rites, austerities, charitable gifts and observances is attained by this holy rite. After death, the devotee attains the eternal Śivaloka and rejoices along with goddess Lalitā like her companion in the world of Śiva for a long time.

29b-30. The sixth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada is called Candana Ṣaṣṭhī. By worshipping the goddess on that day, the devotee attains the same world as that of the deity. If the Ṣaṣṭhī coincides with the constellation

Rohiṇī, the astronomical division called 'Vyatipāta' and Tuesday it is called Kapilāṣaṣṭhī.[1]

31. The observer of the Vrata devoted to the observance, should worship the Sun on that day. Thanks to the grace of Sun-God, he attains cherished desires.

32. O excellent celestial sage, the charitable gift of cooked food, Japa, Homa, the rites of Tarpaṇa to the Pitṛs, Devas and sages, when performed on this day, all these should be known as everlasting.

33. After worshipping a tawny coloured cow with clothes, garlands and unguents, it shall be given to a Vedic Scholar for propitiating the sun.

34. On the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina, O Brāhmaṇa, goddess Kātyāyanī should be worshipped with scents and other auspicious articles and also with various kinds of Naivedya.

35-36a The devotee should then crave forgiveness from the goddess of the Devas, bow to her, and bid farewell to her.

1. One wonders why such a rare and important occasion like *Kapilā-Ṣaṣṭhī* which comes but once in 60 years, is so casually treated here. "The bright half of Bhādrapada" given in the NP. is by *amānta* reckoning *Bhādrapada Kṛṣṇa*. The occurrence of Rohiṇi Constellation in combination with other five factors (Tuesday, *Vyatīpāta yoga* etc) is possible in *amānta* reckoning. Hemādri states the following combination as *Kapilā Ṣaṣṭhī* : Bhādrapada Kṛ. 6th day, Tuesday, Vyatipāta Yoga and Rohiṇi Nakṣatra. VRJ. confirms these by quoting from another source. But the *Karavīra Māhātmya* a *Sthala Purāṇa* of Kolhapur (regarded as a part of the *Pd. P.*) *allows even Sunday as an alternate* to Tuesday for *Kapilā Ṣaṣṭhī*. IT states:

ṣaṣṭhī bhādre ca kṛṣṇā garaja-kṛti yutā rohiṇi-pātayuktā
vāre Bhanau ca Bhaume' pyatha ca mṛga-śire deva-pūjyetha saṁsthe

The commentator-Dājibā Joshi Rao-quotes from *Purāṇasamuccaya*:

bhādra māsyasite pakṣe bhānau caiva kare sthite
pāte kuje ca rauhiṇyāṁ sā ṣaṣṭhī kapilā bhavet

The Com. concludes: "As the text (*Karavīra Māhātmya*) states that this (Kapilā) Saṣṭhī can fall either on Sunday or Tuesday, even Sunday is important. (*atra mūle bhānu-bhaumavārayoḥ kathanād bhānu-vāra-yogo'pi mukhyaḥ.*)

As this *Vrata* is for the propitiation of the Sun-god, Sunday might have been allowed for *Kapilā-ṣaṣṭhī* in the *Karavīra Māhātmya*. I could not trace it to any other authority. The gift of a tawny cow, being an integral part of this *Vrata*, it probably came to be known as *Kapilā Ṣaṣṭhī*.

On this day, either the image made of Sandy soil or the chaste wife of a Brāhmaṇa should be joyfully worshipped by means of clothes and auspicious ornaments, for the satisfaction of Kātyāyanī.

36b-37a. No doubt need be entertained in this respect that, thanks to the grace of Kātyāyinī,* a virgin shall attain the desired bridegroom and a woman the desired son.

37b-39. The highly blessed army of the Devas was entrusted (dedicated) to him (Skanda) by the Devas and hence acquired by the nobleminded six-faced Lord on the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika. Hence, on that day, the devotee should worship the army of the Devas consisting of excellent Devas as well as the six-faced Lord with all charming Upacāras. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, he shall achieve Siddhi mentally desired by him.

40. The worship of the fire-god is also prescribed for this day. The devotee should carry it out perfectly alongwith the worship of fire, and Homas, with different kinds of articles of worship.

41-42. The Asura Tāraka was killed on the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. The Satkṛti (honour and greetings) offered by Brahmā and other gods were received by Skanda. Hence on this day, the devotee should worship Skanda with scents, fragrant flowers, raw rice grains, fruits, clothes, ornaments and diverse kinds of Naivedya.

43. If the Ṣaṣṭhī coincides with Sunday or the constellation Śatabhiṣak or Śatatāra, O excellent sage, it is called Campāṣaṣṭhī.[1]

*The NP uses both forms—Kātyāyanī : Kātyāyinī

1. This delimitation of the term *Campā Ṣaṣṭhī* is supported by Hemādri (*CC-Vrata* I. 590-596 wherein he quotes the SK.P.) and by *Smṛti Kaustubha* 221-222. VRJ. (p. 108) requires Vaidhṛti Yoga, Tuesday and Viśākha Nakṣatra on this day to call it *Campā Ṣaṣṭhī*. But this combination is so rare that it occurs once in 30 years or so. It is strongly recommended that god Maheśvara should be seen on this day. But in Maharashtra, Mārgaśīrṣa Śu. Saṣṭhī is called *Campā Ṣaṣṭhī* irrespective of the day or Yoga.

44. On that day, Lord Viśveśvara, the destroyer of sins, should be seen, worshipped, known and remembered by one who wishes for happiness.

45a. Holy dip, charitable gift etc., performed on this day are proclaimed to be everlasting.

45b-47. O Brāhmaṇa, it was on the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa that Dinapati (the Sun) manifested himself in the form of eternal Viṣṇu, the protector of the Universe. Hence, on this day, he is to be worshipped with scents and other articles of worship, Naivedyas, clothes and ornaments by those who desire for all kinds of happiness.

48-50a. The sixth day in the bright half of the month of Māgha is called Varuṇa[1] Ṣaṣṭhī. On that day, one should worship god Varuṇa who has the eternal form of Viṣṇu, with scents, red silken garments, flowers, Naivedyas, incense and lights. By worshipping thus in accordance with the injunctions, the man obtains whatever he desires. After attaining all the fruits he rejoices, thanks to his grace.

50b-51. On the sixth day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna, O Brāhmaṇa, the devotee should make an image of Lord Paśupati duly in clay and worship it with Upacāras (sixteen articles and modes). He should bathe the image with water or Pañcāmṛta while uttering Śatarudra mantra.

52-53. While unguents shall be smeared over the image, the deity should be worshipped with raw rice-grains, white flowers and fruits. Different kinds of Naivedya should be offered. Nīrājana (waving of lights) is duly performed. After bowing to and craving forgiveness of the Lord, he should be ritualistically sent to Kailāsa.

54. O sage, whether he is a man or a woman, whoever performs the worship of Śiva thus, enjoys all worldly pleasures here and in the end attains the goal of Śiva

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1. This seems to be a contribution of the NP. as Kane does not mention it in HD.V. i.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN

The Exposition of the rites to be observed on the Saptamī (Seventh) day.

Sanātana said :

1. O Nārada, listen. I shall recount to you the holy rites to be observed on the Saptamī[1] days (seventh day of a lunar fortnight). On observing them with devotion, the man attains Sāyujya (entire identity) with the Sun-god.

2-7. One shall take external (i. e. outside the village or town in a river or well) bath on the Saptamī (seventh) day in the bright half of the month of Caitra. He should draw the mystic diagram of the eight-petalled lotus on an altar on the dry ground smeared with cowdung and strewn with white sand. Vibhāvasu (the sun-god must be placed in the pericarp. The two devas Kṛta, Dhātuka (?) should be placed in the eastern petal; the Gandharvas, Kṛta, Kāraka should be placed in the South-east petal; two Rākṣasas shall be placed in the Southern petal. O excellent sage, the two Ākṛtas (?) shall be placed in the South-west petal, the two great serpents, the sons of Kadrū, should be placed (as if they are) in motion in the Western petal, two Yātudhānas should be placed in the north-west petal, two sages shall be placed in the northern petal; O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the devotee should fix one planet in the north-east petal. Their worship is to be performed by means of scents, garlands, unguents, lights, incense, Naivedyas, petel leaves, areca nuts and other things.

8-9. After worshipping them thus, the devotee should perform Homa with ghee. He should give one hundred and eight oblations to the sun-god and offer as oblations eight Āhutis for each of the others, in due order, uttering their names as mantras. Thereafter, he should perform Pūrṇāhuti on the

1. Just as the 4th day of a lunar fortnight was sacred to god Gaṇeśa or the 6th day to god Skanda, the 7th day in a lunar fortnight has the sun as the special presiding deity. Hence the observance of *Saptamī Vratas* are said to lead to *sāyujyatā* (identity) with the sun-god. Hence in V.72 below, people are exhorted to propitiate the sun-god on all *Saptamī* days.

altar. O Brāhmaṇa, in accordance with one's capacity, monetary gifts should be given to Brāhmaṇas.

10. After carrying out all these injunctions, the devotee shall attain all happiness. At the time of death, he penetrates his way through the disc of the Sun and goes to the greatest region.

11. It was on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha that Jāhnavī (the Gaṅgā) was angrily drunk up by Jahnu himself and subsequently let off through the right ear.

12. On that day, the devotee should worship Jāhnavī after taking bath in the pure water, early in the morning. He should worship with scents, fragrant flowers, unbroken rice grains and other things, with all requisite upacāras (articles of worship), etc.

13. Then, a thousand pots are to be given (as gifts) in the course of this Gaṅgāvrata. If devotedly performed, this Vrata[1] is competent to take seven generations in his family to heaven.

14-18a. The holy rite of Kamalavrata[2] is also recommended on this day.[3] Its procedure is being proclaimed. An auspicious lotus is made out of gold of the weight of a gingelly seed. It is then covered with two clothes. The devotee should then worship it with scents, incense and other things, and pray as follows : "Hail to you the lotus-handed god; obeisance to you the supporter of the universe. O Divākara, (Sun-god) salutations to you. O Prabhākara (Sun-god), homage to

1. Although the N.P. does not disclose the name of this *Vrata*, it is called *Gaṅgā saptamī* (VRJ, p. 110; *Smṛti Kaustubha* 112 where it quotes Br. P.). This is celebrated as Jahnu drank up the river Gaṅgā and on prayer from King Bhagiratha, let it flow through his right ear (VR. I. 35-38)

2. Although NP. prescribes this Solar *Vrata* on Vaiśākha Śu. *Saptamī*, the Mt. P. 78. 1-11 and Pd. P. V. 21. 281-290 & following them Hemādri on *Vrata* I. 640-41 prescribe them on Caitra Śu. *Saptamī*.

3. Mt. P. 77. 1-17 describe a *Kamala Vrata* to be performed on this (Vaiśākha Śu. 7 and *not* Caitra Śu 7 as Kane states in HDV. i. 422-23), but the procedure and details are different. Hemādri (*CC-Vrata* I. 642-43) quotes from Pd. P-V. 21. 263-279.

you." After praying thus to the Lord of the Devas, he should offer that lotus alongwith the water pot and a Kapilā (tawny coloured) cow to a Brāhmaṇa, after sunset. He should observe fast throughout that day and take food only on the next day. By feeding the Brāhmaṇas with devotion, he shall attain the entire benefit of the Vrata.

18b-21a. The holy rite Nimbavrata is also to be performed on this day. Listen to its injunction even as I recount it. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the worship of the sun is to be performed with the leaves of Nimba (Margosa), uttering the Mantra 'Khakholkāya' (TĀ 10. 59. 1, TĀĀ 10. 66) etc. beginning with the Praṇava; O Nārada, he should then eat the leaves of Nimba silently and lie down on the bare ground. After feeding the Brāhmaṇas the next day, he should himself take food alongwith his kinsmen. This Nimbapatravrata bestows all happiness on those who observe it.

21b-26a. The holy rite of Śarkarāsaptamī is also to be observed on this day. Listen to its procedure also from me. While the sun was drinking nectar by means of his hand, drops of Amṛta (nectar) fell on the ground, and they grew into the plants of Śāli rice, Mudga (green gram), Yava (barley) and Ikṣu (Sugarcane). Śarkarā (sugar) is therefore the essence of sugarcane and nectar-like and so is liked by the sun. It is holy and used in Havya and Kavya. Śarkarā Saptamī yields the same benefit as the horse-sacrifice. It pacifies all miseries. It increases the line of sons and daughters. On this day sugar must be given as gift and taken alongwith food. This holy rite must be assiduously performed, as it is liked by the Sun-god. He who observes this with great devotion, shall attain the goal of the good (i.e. Heaven).

26b-27. Indra himself was born as the sun on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha. He should be worshipped according to the injunction. The devotee observes fast and subdues his sense-organs. O Brāhmaṇa, thanks to the grace of Devendra, he attains heaven.

28-29a. On the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha, the sun god became Vivasvān

(the refulgent Sun). The devotee worships him separately with scents and fragrant flowers. O leading Brāhmaṇa, he (the observer of this Vrata) attains identity with the Sun.

29b-30. The auspicious holy rite called Avyaṅgavrata[1] is to be observed on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa. At the end of the Pūjā of Gopati (sun) in order to propitiate him, he must give a cotton cloth four and a half Hastas long. This Vrata is very auspicious.

31. If this Saptamī coincides with the Hasta constellation it will be destructive of sins. Charitable gifts, Japa, Homa,—everything performed on this day shall attain everlasting status.

32-33. The holy rite of Amuktābharaṇa is to be observed on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada. The worship of Maheśa accompanied by Umā is glorified on this day. He is worshipped alongwith Gaṅgā and others with the sixteen Upacāras. After the prayer and (paying) obeisance, he should ritualistically bid farewell to the deity, for the flourishing increase of all desires.

34-39. The holy rite of Phalasaptamī[2] is also to be observed on this day. Its procedure is being described: The seven fruits are—a coconut, a brinjal, an orange, a pomegranate, a white gourd, Bṛhatī and areca nut. These are placed in front of Maheśa. A thread in which seven threads are turned and seven knots are made is also placed in front of Maheśa, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, after worshipping the Lord with great devotion, the woman-devotee shall wear the thread round her left hand and the man-devotee round his right hand.

1. As Kane notes (HD. V. i., pp. 264), this form of sun-worship was imported from Iran (from Magas or Śākadvīpiya Brāhmanas) or borrowed from Parsis. Sk. *Avyaṅga* here is hyper-Sanskritisation of Avestan *Aivyaṅghana* 'a girdle'. '*Aivyaṅga*' is a hollow strip made of fine white cotton thread, resembling a serpent's slough, 122 fingers in length. The Brahmanisation of this Vrata becomes complete by Japa, Homa and Dakṣiṇās.

2. This is a special variety of *Phala-Saptamī*. For other varieties vide HD. V. i, pp. 353-354. According to Pd. P. V. 21. 249-262 (quoted by Hemādri also) the Sungod, and *not* Mahādeva, is the chief deity as in the NP.

This shall be worn till the end of a year. He should feed seven Brāhmaṇas with milk puddings and bid farewell to them. The intelligent devotee shall partake of it himself. In order to make Vrata perfect and complete, those fruits are given to seven Brāhmaṇas. O Brāhmaṇa, the observer of the Vrata continues it for seven years with due observances of fast. Such an observer of this Vrata attains identity with Mahādeva.

40-45a. The holy rite Śubhaśaptamī[1] is to be observed on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina. On that day, the devotee should begin the holy rite by taking his bath and worshipping the deity. He should make excellent Brāhmaṇas read the holy books. He should then worship a Kapilā cow and pray thus—"O gentle one, I am gifting you away. May Aryamā, the sun himself be pleased. Protect you, the entire Universe, since you are born of Dharma." After praying thus, he gives the cow to a Vedic Scholar, alongwith the monetary gift. O Brāhmaṇa, after, bowing down to him, he himself should set the cow free. He should take in only Pañcagavya. Thus, the Vrata is concluded. On the next day he should feed Brāhmaṇas. He should partake of that food that is left over by them. O Brāhmaṇa, this Vrata that is performed thus, is well praised. A person endowed with faith shall attain worldly pleasures and salvation, thanks to the grace of the Lord of the Devas.

45b-47. The holy rite called Śāka Saptamī[2] is to be observed on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika. On that day, the devotee should give seven different vegetables to seven Brāhmaṇas alongwith gold lotuses. He himself shall take in only vegetable food. On the next day, he should feed the Brāhmaṇas and give them monetary gifts as well. After bidding farewell to them, he himself should partake of the food silently alongwith his kinsmen.

48-51. The holy rite of Mitravrata is to be observed on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa.

1. Cf. Mt. P. 79. 1-14.

2. This is a different variety of *Śāka Vrata*. For others vide HD. V, 1. P. 423.

The sun was born of Aditi and Kaśyapa and was named Mitra and Viṣṇu made him his right eye. Hence on this day, O Brāhmaṇa, the devotee shall worship him duly and feed seven Brāhmaṇas with sweets and other things. He should then bid farewell to them and take food himself. After duly performing this, the devotee shall certainly attain the world of the Sun. A Brāhmaṇa devotee attains Brahma's world and a Śūdra devotee takes his rebirth in a good family.

52-54. The holy rite called Abhaya Saptamī is to be observed on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa. The devotee observes fast and performs the holy rite standing on the bare ground (dharā-sthitaḥ). He worships the sun during the three Sandhyās (dawn, noon and dusk), then gifts to a Brāhmaṇa a Prastha-measure of sweet meats alongwith cooked rice soaked in milk. Thereafter, he feeds seven other Brāhmaṇas and gives Dakṣiṇā to all the eight, which may be in the form of a piece of land or gold. He then bids farewell to them and takes food himself. This is the holy rite called Abhaya. It bestows fearlessness (or Liberation from Saṁsāra) on all.

55. Other Brāhmaṇas call this by the name of Mārtaṇḍa Vrata. But learned men say that both are the same, the deity being one and the same.

56-60a. The holy Vrata called Sarvāpti[1] (Saptamī) is to be observed on the seventh day in the dark half of the month of Māgha. The devotee observes fast during the day and worships the disc of the Sun made of gold, with scents, fragrant flowers, etc. and keeps awake at night. The next day he should feed seven Brāhmaṇas with milk-puddings and give them coconuts as Dakṣiṇā. To the preceptor, he gives the gold replica of the Sun's disc alongwith other Dakṣiṇās. He should pray to him earnestly and bid farewell to him. Thereafter, he takes food himself. This is called the holy rite of Sarvāptidā. It yields all cherished desires. Thanks to the power of this Vrata, dualism (Dvaitaṁ) is achieved in every respect (? desires are fulfilled).

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1. This is a special variety of this Vrata in the NP. For another variety vide HD. V. i. p. 444.

60b-62a. The holy rite of Acalāvrata is performed on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Māgha. This is also called Trilocana Jayantī (Birth anniversary of the three-eyed Lord). It is remembered as the destroyer of all sins.

62b-64. It is also Ratha Saptami[1] that grants (even) emperorship. The devotee should worship the image of Sun made of gold. The image is placed in a chariot yoked to golden horses. Alongwith elephants, he shall give this (as gift to a deserving person). He who performs this Vrata devoutly joyfully enjoys all the pleasures in this world and goes to the region of god Śiva. This Saptamī is Bhāskarī Saptamī and is comparable to a crore of shining planets. On this day, it is laid down that one shall take one's bath at the time of Aruṇodaya (day-break). He shall place on his head seven leaves each of Arka and Badarī and take his bath for absolving the sins of seven births.

65-68. Lord Sun has himself prescribed a Putraprada[2] Vrata (holy rite that grants sons) on this day. "I shall be born with a part of mine as the son of the person who duly worships me on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Māgha. I will be very much delighted." Hence, the devotee should conquer his sense-organs and observe fast for a day and a night. On the next day, he should perform Homa and feed the Brāhmaṇas with cooked rice mixed with curds or milk and puddings. He who performs the holy rite of Putra Saptamī according to these injunctions, shall get a good son who will be free from ailments and will live for a long time.

69-70. One should perform the rite of Arkaputa on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Tapasya (Phālguna). He should worship the sun with the leaves of the Arka (the sun) plant. He shall eat the leaves of the Arka plant. He

1. This is an important *Vrata* in the Deccan. VRj. pp. 115-116 gives a different *Vrata* in detail and quotes *Bhaviṣyottara* P. story how Kṛṣṇa's son was restored to health thereby, *vide* HD. V. i. pp. 388-389.

2. Kane records a number of *Vratas* to be observed on different days in different months, all granting a son as their fruit (vide HD. V. i. pp. 343-345) but this one in the NP is different from the *Putra-Saptamī Vrata* in HD. V. i. 345.

shall repeat the names of the sun continuously. Thus is the holy rite called Arkapuṭavrata. It bestows sons and wealth. It destroys all sins.

71. O Brāhmaṇa, some call this holy rite Trivargada-Vrata (a Vrata that bestows Dharma, Artha and Kāma the three aims of life), others call it Yajñavrata on account of the rite of Homa duly performed in it.[1] O excellent Brāhmaṇa, it is said that the sun is to be propitiated in all the Saptamīs in all the months. It shall enable one to realise all desires.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN

The review of the Vratas to be observed on Aṣṭamī (eighth days of Lunar fortnights)

Sanātana said :

1. Bhavānī's birth is reported to have taken place on the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Caitra. The great festival of Yātrā (procession) must be performed by making a hundred circumambulations.

2. The vision of the mother of the Universe is the bestower of all joys and pleasures on men. On this very same day the holy rite of Aśoka-Kalikā-Prāśana (drinking of water mixed with the tender sprouts of the Aśoka tree) also has to be observed.

3. Those who drink (water mixed with) eight buds of the Aśoka tree on the eighth day in the bright half of

1. With exception of Vratas like *Kṛṣṇa-Janmāṣṭamī*, majority of the *Aṣṭamī Vratas* are for the propitiation of some female deity—be it Jagadambā (Pārvati), Mahālakṣmi or Reṇukā. The Bhavāni Yātrā is given in the Kāśi Khaṇḍa of the SK.P.—VJr., P. 118.

the month of Caitra, when the constellation of Punarvasu coincides with it, never experience any sorrow.[1]

4a. This is also called Mahāṣṭamī since the worship of goddess is ordained.

4b-7a. On the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, the devotee observes fast. He takes his bath (in cool) water and performs the rite of ablution to the goddess Aparājitā by means of the water from Māṁsī (Indian Spikenard) and Bālaka (a fragrant root of the Plant Andropogom Muricatus. After worshipping with scents etc., Naivedya comprising of sugar is offered. Before performing breakfast on the following Navamī day, he should feed some virgins. O Brāhmaṇa, thanks to the grace of the goddess, he will move about in the worlds (above) in a refulgent aerial chariot, himself brilliant like the sun.[2]

7b-9a. By worshipping the three-eyed Lord on the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, the devotee shall remain in the Śiva Loka. He will be bowed to by all the Devas. The man who worships the goddess on the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha moves about in an aerial chariot alongwith the groups of Gandharvas and Apsaras.

9b-12. On the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha, the devotee takes his bath in water, mixed with turmeric powder. With the same water, he shall perform the rite of ablution of the goddess in accordance with the injunctions. After bathing the deity in pure water, subsequently, he should smear the deity with camphor and sandal paste. After offering Naivedya consisting of sugar, water for Ācamana rite should be offered. He should then feed Brāhmaṇas and give them suitable gold and monetary gifts. After bidding them farewell, he should take food himself silently. By performing this holy rite, the man shall attain to the world of the goddess.

1. The NP has omitted the *mantra* at the time of worshipping Aśoka as the worship of the Aśoka tree is deleted. But this verse (and the *mantra tvam aśoka harābhīṣṭa*) are given in the GP. I. 133. 1-2, and in the LP quoted in Hemādri's *Vrata* I. 862-63.

2. This *Vrata* is not recorded in the VRJ and in Kane (HD. V. i).

13-14* On the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, the devotee should worship the goddess in accordance with the religious injunctions. After bathing the idol in milk, he should offer sweet cooked rice as Naivedya. He should feed Brāhmaṇas on the next day, take food himself and conclude the holy rite. This holy rite increases the progeny.

15. The holy rite called Daśāphala vrata[1] is on the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Śrāvaṇa. The devotee decides on fasting, takes his bath and performs the Nitya (usual, prescribed) rites.

16-17. With ten leaves of black-coloured Tulasī, he worships uttering (in the dative case) these ten names of the Lord—Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Kṛṣṇāya namaḥ) Viṣṇu, Ananta, Govinda, Garuḍadhvaja, Dāmodara, Hṛṣīkeśa, Padmanābha, Hari and Prabhu. One should always worship Lord Kṛṣṇa by means of these names.

18. He should then circumambulate the deity and prostrate himself before it. Thus he should perform the most excellent of all the Vratas for ten days.

19. In the beginning, in the middle and in the end, he should perform homa in accordance with the injunctions. Uttering the Mantra of (the names of) Kṛṣṇa, he should perform hundred and eight Homas with Caru (cooked rice soaked in ghee).

20-21. At the end of the Homa, the intelligent devotee should worship the preceptor duly. He should get a replica of the leaf of Tulasī exquisitely made in gold and place it in a vessel made of gold, copper, clay or bamboo. He should get an

*The text : *nabhomāse sitāṣṭamyām* need be emended as *nabhomāse' sitāṣṭamyām*. The *avagraha* (marked here as') before *sita* is necessary as this Vrata falls on Śravaṇa K. ṛ8th (HD. V.i. P. 311, also VRJ. p. 122 ff) If *amānta* reckoning is not taken, it will fall on Bhādrapada which is not recognised in the NP here.

1. VV. 15-26 describe the *Daśā-phala Vrata* in honour of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The *Vrata* is detailed in VRJ. P. 122 ff. and is briefiy described in HD. V. i. 312. The misprint *site* for *asite* is pointed out in a footnote to that verse.

image made in gold and worship it in accordance with the injunctions.

22. He should place the image in the vessel and offer it to the preceptor. A cow alongwith its calf, should be given fully bedecked in ornaments and clothes.

23. For ten days, he should offer ten Pūrikās (fried cakes of wheat flour) to the Lord Kṛṣṇa. The observer of the rite shall either offer these Pūrikās to a knower of the mode (of worship) or eat them himself.

24. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, a bed also should be given as gift in accordance with his capacity. On the tenth day he should give the image to the preceptor.

25-26. At the conclusion of the holy rite, ten Pūrikās should be given to each of the ten Brāhmaṇas. He should continue this rite for ten years. After performing this excellent Vrata for ten years and after duly observing the fast, the devotee shall realise all his cherished desires. There is no doubt in this that in the end, he will attain Sāyujya (One-ness) with Kṛṣṇa.

27-28a. This day remembered as (Kṛṣṇa-Janmāṣṭamī)[1] removes the sins of men. Merely by observing fast on this birth-

1. VV 27-40 describe the *Kṛṣṇa-Janmāṣṭamī Vrata*, popular all over India. Not merely the NP but other Purāṇas like Pd. P. III. Ch, 13, Mt. P. Ch. 56, AP Ch. 183 highly glorify this *Vrata*. In the *Bhaviṣyottara* P. 44. 1-60 Kṛṣṇa himself narrates this *Vrata* to Yudhiṣṭhira : Mediaeval writers on Dharma Śāstra relying on Purāṇas, other than the *Bhāgavata*, have discussed a great deal about the procedure etc. of performing this *Vrata* and brought in the Mimāṁsā and Astronomy in distinguishing between the *Janmāṣṭamī* and *Jayantī-Vratas*. But that is academic. The NP gives the main features of fast, worship, *jāgara* (remaining awake that night), though he does not mention the breaking of the fast. By the way, it may be noted that the *Varāha Purāṇa* (46.14) records that Kṛṣṇa was born on 12th day in the bright half of Āṣāḍha.

In passing, I may record a peculiar custom called *Gopāla-Vāla* or *Dahī-haṇḍī* in Maharashtra. It is based on the Bh. P. X. 5.15 where the cowherds expressed their delight (at the birth of Kṛṣṇa) by sprinkling curds, ghee etc. on each other. On this occasion, people in Maharashtra hang up earthen pots full of curds, butter milk etc. and celebrate with songs etc. the birth of Kṛṣṇa and some one breaks the pots and people vie with each other to get themselves drenched in the curds etc. falling from the holes in the pots.

day of Hari, one is undoubtedly liberated from the sins of seven births.

28b-31a. The devotee who observes fast shall take his bath with gingelly seeds mixed in the pure water of a river etc. The intelligent devotee shall make a mystic diagram on the platform erected in a good place. In its middle, a Kalaśa (vessel) made of copper or clay is placed. Over this vessel, another copper vessel is placed. Above this latter vessel, the auspicious golden image of Kṛṣṇa is placed and covered with two cloths. With a pure mind, he should then worship it with Pādya and other Upacāras.

31b-34. In the eight quarters he should worship Devakī, Vasudeva, Yaśodā, Nanda, Vraja (colony of the cowherds), cowherds, cowherdesses and cows. Ārārtika rite (waving of lights before the deity) is performed. Forgiveness is craved for, by bowing down with devotion. The devotee remains thus till midnight, when he bathes Hari with Pañcāmṛta and pure water. He should again worship the Lord with scents and other things. He should then offer the following things as Naivedya in a silver vessel : viz. Coriander, barley, ginger, sugarcandy, and ghee. O Nārada, these should be offered as Naivedya.

35. After performing the Ārārtika (waving of lights in front of the deity) rite once again, he should think of the Lord as assuming ten different forms. He should then offer Arghya to the rising moon.

36. After requesting the Lord of the Devas for forgiveness the observer of the holy rite should pass the rest of the night by reciting hymns from the Purāṇas and sing diverse songs in accompaniment of instrumental music.

37. After the daybreak, he should feed eminent Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice. Delighted in his mind, he should offer Dakṣiṇā and bid them farewell.

38. Thereafter, he should give that image of Viṣṇu to the preceptor alongwith gold, cow and plot of land as well as monetary gifts. After bidding farewell to him, the devotee should partake of his food.

39. After performing thus the holy rite, the man attains Goloka itself, in the company of his wife, children, friends

and servants. He goes there, seated in an excellent aerial chariot.

40. In the whole of the three worlds, there is no other holy Vrata equal to this. By performing this, the benefit of a crore of Ekādaśī Vratas is acquired.

41-43. On the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Nabhasya (Bhādrapada) a person should perform the holy rite of Rādhāvrata.[1] As before, he should perform the worship of the gold image of Rādhā placed on the pot. At mid-day, after worshipping her, the devotee should take in a single meal. The devotee who is physically strong observes fast (for the complete day). On the next day, he feeds the Suvāsinīs in accordance with injunctions. He then offers the image to the preceptor. He shall partake of his food and formally conclude Vrata.

44. O Brāhmaṇa sage, if this holy rite is performed duly, the observer of Vrata obtains the esoteric secret of the Vraja (of Kṛṣṇa's time) and stays among the followers of Rādhā.

45-46. The holy rite of Dūrvāṣṭamī[2] too is to be observed on this day. Listen to it from me. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the Liṅga is to be placed on the Dūrvā-grass growing in a pure and clean spot. He should then worship it with flowers, incense, scents, lights and Naivedyas, viz. curds, raw rice grains and fruits. At the end of Pūjā, he should, with great concentration, offer Arghya uttering the two Mantras.

47-49a.[2] "O Dūrvā grass, bowed to by the Devas and the Asuras, your birth is from nectar. Grant blessedness and line of children to me. Be a bestower of achievements of

1. Pd. P. III. 7. 21-23. It is performed on the 8th day in both the fortnights of Bhādrapada (IID. V-1. 392).

2. VV. 25-52 describe the *Dūrvāṣṭamī Vrata* associated with Śiva Liṅga. Women and men of all castes are eligible for this. The *Smṛti Kaustubha* 228-230 and the *Bhaviṣyottara* P. 56 give another variety in which the *Dūrvā-grass* itself (unassociated with any deity like Śiva or Gaṇeśa) is the deity—that tenacity of the Dūrvā grass for its spread and survival is prayed for the spread of one's own race. VV. 47-49a are repeated as the prayer to Dūrvā-grass,

my works. Just as you are spread over the ground with your branches and branchlets, so also grant me growing progeny that shall be immortal and unageing."

49b-50. The devotee then circumambulates it, feeds Brāhmaṇas, gives Dakṣiṇā to the Brāhmaṇas, takes food himself and returns home. Alongwith the monetary gifts, he should give Brāhmaṇas splendid, fragrant and sweet fruits.

51. Thus, O Brāhmaṇa, the holy rite of Dūrvāṣṭamī is sacred and destructive of the sins of men of all the four castes and particularly of the woman folk.

52. If any woman, out of delusion, does not worship Dūrvā duly, undoubtedly she becomes a widow for three births.

53. O Brāhmaṇa, if the Aṣṭamī coincides with the constellation Jyeṣṭhā, it should be known as Jyeṣṭhāṣṭamī.[1] If worshipped, it is destructive of sins.

54. The holy rite of Mahālakṣmī begins on this day and lasts for sixteen days. It brings about all riches.

55. "O Mahālakṣmī, I am devoted to you and I shall perform your Vrata. Hence, thanks to your grace, may it come to a conclusion (May it be completed) without any impediment."

56. After saying this, the devotee twists round sixteen threads to form a string. He ties sixteen knots therein and ties the string round his right hand.

57. The observer of the holy rite should worship Mahālakṣmī everyday, with scents and other things, upto the following Aṣṭamī in the dark half.

58a. On that day the intelligent devotee should perform the rite of Udyāpana (concluding rite).

58b. Under the canopy of cloth, the devotee makes the mystic diagram called Sarvatobhadra. The Kalaśa (vessel) is installed thereon and a lamp is lit.

1. VV. 53-74a describe *Jyeṣṭhāṣṭamī Vrata* which is in honour of goddess Lakṣmi. The wearing of threads with sixteen knots is still popularly practised by women in Maharashtra, but not other details of gold images, Homa etc. VRJ. (pp. 135-156) gives the details of this *Vrata*, *Pūjā* and *Udyāpana* (concluding rite) on the basis of the *Bhaviṣyottara* P. *vide* HD. V. 1 pp. 304 and 376.

59-62. He should take off strings from the arm and keep it below the water pot. Four images in the form of the deity are made in gold, and they are bathed in water and Pañcāmṛta. After worshipping them in accordance with the injunctions, with the sixteen types of Upacāras, the devotee keeps awake till midnight, to the accompaniment of songs and instrumental music. At midnight, when the nectar-rayed moon rises, Arghya is offered to Mahālakṣmī stationed in the middle of the moon's disc, in accordance with the injunctions, together with Śrīkhaṇḍa (sandal) and other material. The string is also offered.

[The following Mantras are utterred]

63. "O Moon, born of the ocean of milk, brother of Mahālakṣmī, O storehouse of nectar, accompanied by Rohiṇī, accept my Arghya."

64. "O Kamalā, born of the ocean of milk, a resident of the Lotus, resting on the chest of Viṣṇu, be the bestower of all the cherished desires on me."

65. "O gentle lady Reṇukā, O beloved wife of Jamadagni, O Mistress of the Universe, having only a single Lord, O unchanging one, O mother of Paraśurāma, do what is auspicious to me".

66-69. The devotee should pray to the goddess Mahālakṣmī with the above Mantras. He should worship Brāhmaṇa women duly with scents, lac juice and collyrium and feed them. He should perform Homa oblating in the fire Bilva, lotus and milk puddings. If they are not available O Brāhmaṇa, homa is performed with ghee. For acquiring houses, homa is performed with sacrificial twigs or gingelly seeds. For conquering (i. e. averting) death and for subduing ailments the following articles are offered as gifts viz.—sandal paste, palmyra leaf, flower-garland, raw unbroken rice grains, Dūrvā grass, thread with saffron applied, two coconuts and foodstuffs. The food-stuffs should be placed in a new winnowing basket. There must be sixteen of them in each item.

70-71. The observer of the holy rite shall cover it with another winnowing basket and present it uttering the following

Mantra : —"May Lakṣmī, born of the ocean of milk, sister of the moon and the beloved wife of Viṣṇu be pleased with this Vrata". He (the person performing this Vrata) should dedicate the four gold images to the Brāhmaṇas.

72. Thereafter, with sweet ccoked rice he shall feed four Brāhmaṇas and sixteen Suvāsinīs (married women whose husbands are alive). He should bid farewell to them giving them their due Dakṣiṇās.

73-74. After concluding the observances, he should take food in the company of the affectionate ones. By performing this Vrata of Mahālakṣmī, O Brāhmaṇa, in accordance, with the injunctions, one enjoys all worldly desirable pleasures and one shall live in the world of Lakṣmī for a long time. This is called Asokāṣṭamī also, and in it the holy rite of Ramā (Śrī) is complete.

75-76a. On this day, the Aśoka tree is worshipped and only a single meal is taken every day. By performing the Aśoka Vrata, the lady, wherever she is born in this world of sorrow, becomes free from sorrow. No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

76b-78a. O Brāhmaṇa, Mahaṣṭamī[1] is to be observed in the bright half of the month of Āśvina.

On that day, Durgā is to be worshipped with all Upacāras. By observing fast or taking a single meal on the Mahāṣṭamī day, the devotee attains all round affluence and rejoices like a god for a long time.

78b-80. The holy rite of Karaka Vrata is to be observed in thedark half of the month of Kārttika. On that day, Śambhu accompanied by Umā is to be assiduously worshipped. Arghya is also to be always offered, at the time of the moon-rise, by the observers of the Vrata who wish for a son endowed with all good qualities or happiness of diverse kinds.

80b-81. Gopāṣṭamī rite is to be observed in the bright half of the month of Kārttika. On that day, one shall perform

1. VV. 76b-78a describe Mahāṣṭami, the 8th day of Navarātra in Āśvina Śu.

the worship of cows; fodder is offered to the cows, cows are circumambulated and followed. Cows are given as gifts by those who desire all riches.

82-85. A special holy rite is performed on the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. The image of a couple is made out of Darbha grass. They are named Anagha and Anaghā. They are accompanied by many sons. (images are made of these as well). On a spot scrubbed and cleaned with cow dung and made auspicious, the couple are placed and worshipped with scents, fragrant flowers, and diverse kinds of Upacāras. The devotee feeds a Brāhmaṇa couple and bids farewell to them after giving them Dakṣiṇās. A man or a woman can perform this holy rite. By performing it in accordance with the injunctions, he or she gets a son endowed with good characteristics. There is no doubt about this.

86-87. On the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the devotee observes fast in the presence of Kālabhairava. By doing so and keeping awake for that night, one is liberated from great sins. Whatever inauspicious sin has been committed by a person in his birth as a human being, is dissolved entirely by seeing Kālabhairava image;

88. The holy rite of Śrāddha called Aṣṭaka[1] is to be observed on the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Pauṣa. It makes the Pitṛs (manes) satisfied for a year. It increases the line of children in the family.

89. By worshipping Śiva devotedly on the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa, one attains worldly pleasures and liberation by acting in pursuance of his (unflinching) devotion.

90. On the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Māgha, one should, with great devotion, worship Bhadrakālī, the destroyer of the hosts of enemies, and the bestower of all cherished desires to her devotees.

1. Although the NP. limited the term *Aṣṭaka* to the 8th day in Pauṣa, the *Āśvalāyana* Gr. 5. II. 4. 1. states that the 8th *tithis* in the dark halves of *Hemanta* and *Śiśira* (i.e. the months of Mārgaśirṣa, Pauṣa, Māgha and Phālguna) are *Aṣṭakā* days.

91. O Brāhmaṇa, one who wishes for an unbroken line of children and absence of defeat in battle, should propitiate Bhīṣma on the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Māgha.

92. O Brāhmaṇa, on the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Phālguna, one should worship goddess Bhīmā. For the achievement of all cherished desires, he should be devoted to the Vrata.

93. O Brāhmaṇa, by worshipping properly with scents and other things, Śiva and Śivā on the eighth day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna, one shall become the Lord of all Siddhis (Super-natural Powers.)

94. One should worship goddess Śītalā[1] on the eighth day in the second fortnight of the month of Phālguna, with all kinds of cooked food prepared duly on the previous Saptamī (seventh) day.

95. "O Śītalā, you are the mother of the Universe. O Śītalā, you are the father of the Universe. O Śītalā, you are the support and base of the Universe. Obeisance, to you, salutations to you, O Śītalā.

96. I bow down to goddess Śītalā, who is seated on a donkey, is naked, holds the broom and the water pot and who destroys swellings.

97. Goddess Śītalā shall be the bestower of calmness and queller of swellings to those who stand in water and repeat the name "Śītalā, Śītalā".

98. O Brāhmaṇa, thanks to the grace of goddess Śītalā, he (the devotee) shall be tranquil for a year;—he who worships Śītalā by means of these Mantras of Śītalā.

99. By worshipping Śiva and Śivā on the eighth day in any of the halves and in any of the months, one attains the desired benefit.

1. Śītalā is the goddess of Small Pox. According to *amānta* reckoning the *Śītalāṣṭamī* is on Caitra Kṛ. 8.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN

The Exposition of the Vratas to be observed on Navamī (ninth) day (in the lunar fortnight)

Sanātana said :

1. O leading Brāhmaṇa, henceforth, I shall recount to you the Vratas to be observed on the Navamī day (i.e. ninth day in the lunar fortnight). On performing these rites, people in the world attain the desired fruit.

2. The holy rite of Śrī Rāma Navamī[1] is on the ninth day in the bright half of the month of Caitra. A devotee who is physically strong, should duly observe full fast on that day.

3. If he is incapable physically (to observe full fast), he should take a single meal on that day after the midday festival. He shall propitiate Rāma, by feeding the Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice.

4-5a. By means of (gifts of) cows, plots of lands, gingelly seeds, gold etc, and by means (of gifts of) clothes and ornaments, Brāhmaṇas should be propitiated. He who devoutly performs the holy rite of Śrī Rāmanavamī shall shake off all his sins in this world and attain the region of Viṣṇu.

5b-7. The holy rite of Mātṛvrata is also to be observed on this same day. The Yoginīs, sixtyfour in number, accompanied by Bhairava, are to be propitiated by means of garlands, scents, clothes and Naivedyas. O prominent Brāhmaṇa, it was on this day that Bhadrakālī was crowned in the chieftancy of all mothers. Hence, one should worship her by observing fast and controlling his sense-organs, on this day.

8. He who worships Caṇḍikā on the ninth day in either of the fortnights of the month of Vaiśākha, in accordance with the injunctions in the matter, rejoices alongwith the Devas.

1. VV. 2-5a briefly state the outline of *Rāmanavamī Vrata*. We find its detailed description in works like VRJ. (pp. 149-154) where the dialogue of Sage Agasti and Sutikṣṇa (regarding the observance of this *Vrata*) from SK. P. is quoted. Hemādri's mention of the *Vrata* (CC. *Vrata* I, pp. 951-46) shows that it was popular in Maharashtra before 12th Cent. A.D. at least. NP.'s cursory treatment shows that it was not attached much importance then, though *Rāma-navamī* is now a national festival.

9-11a. On the ninth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, the excellent man who observes fast, should worship Umā duly and feed virgins and Brāhmaṇas in accordance with his ability. He should give them monetary gifts to the extent of his capacity. He should partake of only cooked Śāli rice alongwith milk. O Brāhmaṇa, the man who duly performs this Umā Vrata[1] enjoys great pleasures in this world. In the end, he attains the goal of heaven.

11b-12. (Defective) O chief of Brāhmaṇas, he who performs (the following) holy rite on the ninth day in either of the fortnights in the month of Āṣāḍha and worships the fair-complexioned goddess Aindrī riding the elephant Airāvata and and partakes food only at night, shall become the enjoyer of pleasures in the world of the Devas. He will move about in the vehicle of the Devas or he will proceed along the path called Devayāna.

13-15. In the month of Śrāvaṇa, O leading Brāhmaṇa, the devotee should take food only at night, or he shall observe fast for two fortnights and worship Kaumārī Caṇḍikā. He should worship the goddess, the remover of sins, by means of scents, fragrant flowers, incense, lights and different Naivedyas. He should feed virgins. He who performs the excellent Kaumārī Vrata[2] devotedly in this manner, shall go to the eternal world of the goddess by means of an aerial chariot.

16-17a. The ninth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada is glorified by the name of Nandā Navamī. He who worships Durgā duly with all Upacāras (articles of worship and other formalities) on that day, attains the benefit of a horse-sacrifice and is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu.

17b-20. The ninth day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina is glorified by the name Mahānavamī.[3] On this day,

1. VV. 9-11a describe a special *Umā Vrata* not recorded by Kane in HD V. 1.

2. VV. 13-15 describe a special *Kaumārī Vrata* with *Caṇḍikā* as the main deity. This is not noted by Kane in HD. V. i.

3. VV. 176-22 describe the Mahā-navamī in honour of Durgā. As a part of *Nava-rātra* or the *Durgā pūjā* festival, it is observed all over India. VRJ, p. 158 gives a detailed procedure on the basis of the *Bhaviṣya, Devī*,

O Brāhmaṇa, the worship of the Śamī tree should be performed in the afternoon in the eastern quarter. Then, at night, in the first watch (Yāma) = 3 hours), the following (pertaining to the goddess) should be worshipped viz— sword, bow, arrows, iron club, trident, javelin, axe, dagger, leathern shield, and umbrella, banner, elephant, horse, cow and bull, book, balance, baton, noose and discus and the conch. After worshipping a buffalo with scents and other articles of worship (Upacāra), it should be chopped off and dedicated to Bhadrakālī.

21. After offering oblations and after partaking of only cooked rice, the devotee should give the monetary gifts to the Brāhmaṇa and formally conclude the Vrata.

22. He who thus worships Durgā, the destroyer of miseries and sufferings of men, enjoys excellent worldly pleasures here and shall attain heavenly region in the end.

23. The ninth day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika is glorified as Aksaya Navamī (everlasting Navamī) On that day, the devotee should perform the rite of Tarpaṇa at the roots of Aśvattha (the holy fig tree).

24. O Nārada, with mantras special to his own branch of the Vedas, that Tarpaṇa rite of the Devas, sages and Pitṛs should be performed correctly. Then the devotee should offer Arghya to the sun.

25. Then he should feed Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice. After taking his food and giving Dakṣiṇā to the Brāhmaṇas, he should rest and relax, O chief of sages.

26. It is the word (precept) of Vidhi (god Brahmā) that, if anyone performs Japa, Dāna, worship of the Brāhmaṇas, Homa thus, everything of such acts shall be entirely everlasting.

27-28a. The ninth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa is glorified as Nandinī (Navamī). He who

Viṣṇu-dharma P. and *Vārāhī Tantra.* Kane notes more varieties and records a grant by King Pulakesin (early Cālukya dynasty) on Mahā-navami in Kārttika (HD. V. i. pp. 373-74). In Maharashtra we worship the Śami tree and all our implements on this day.

observes fast on that day and worships elaborately goddess Jagadambā (the mother of the Universe) with scents and other things, attains the benefit of a horse-sacrifice. There is no doubt in this respect.

28b-29a. The devotee should worship Mahāmāyā on the ninth day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa. O Brāhmaṇa, that is conducive to the acquisition of the fruit of a Vājapeya-sacrifice provided he takes only a single meal every day.

29b-31a. The ninth day in the bright half of the month of Māgha is worshipped by the people. It is called Mahānandā as it always causes delight to men. No doubt need be entertained in this respect that the holy bath, charitable gift, Japa, Homa, observance of fast, everything performed on that day has an everlasting benefit.

31b. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the ninth day in the bright fortnight of the month of Phālguna is of a highly meritorious nature. It is called Ānandā.[1] It is remembered as the remover of all sins. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, he who observes fast on that day and worships goddess Ānandā attains all desired benefits. It is the Truth. It is the Truth that is spoken by me.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN

The Holy rites to be observed on Daśamī (i.e. tenth) days (in The Lunar fortnight)

Sanātana said :

1. Henceforth, I shall recount to you the holy rites to be observed on Daśamī (tenth) days (of lunar fortnights). On observing them devotedly, man becomes a favourite of Dharmarāja.

1. It appears that some *navamī Vratas* are associated with *ānandā vide Nandinī* in *Mārgaśīrṣa, mahānandā* in *Māgha* and *Ānandā* in *Phālguna*. The last is recorded as *Ānandā* by Hemādri (*Vrata* I. 948-850). The procedure in the NP. is different from the one recorded by Kane (HD. V. i. P. 270).

2. On the tenth day, in the bright half of the month of Caitra, the devotee should worship Dharmarāja[1] by means of the seasonal flowers and fruits plucked for the nonce, and scents and other things

3. He should either observe fast or take a single meal per day. After feeding fourteen excellent Brāhmaṇas, he should give them monetary gifts according to his capacity.

4. O Brāhmaṇa, he who thus performs the worship of Dharmarāja, shall at the behest of Dharma, attain similarity with the Devas—a position from which he will not fall.

5-6. On the tenth day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, a man should worship god Viṣṇu with scents and other articles of worship and formalities) as well as with white fragrant flowers. He should make hundred circumambulations, (round Viṣṇu's shrine) and assiduously feed Brāhmaṇas. He (thereby) attains to the world of Viṣṇu (Viṣṇuloka). No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

7. It was on the tenth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha that the Jāhnavī (the river Gaṅgā), the most excellent of all the rivers, came to the Earth from the heaven. Hence, the day is remembered as the bestower of merit.

8-9. The month of Jyeṣṭha,[2] the bright fortnight, the constellation of Hasta, Wednesday, Daśamī Tithi, the Gara (Karaṇa), Ānanda (Yoga) and Vyatīpāta, the moon in the Zodiac of Virgo and the sun in the Zodiac of Taurus—the combination of all these ten, O Brāhmaṇa, is regarded to be

1. This and the next Vrata is not recorded in the VRJ. or HD. V. 1.

2. This astronomical combination constituting Daśaharā is repeated in the Sk. P. as follows :

jyeṣṭhe māsi site pakṣe daśamyāmbudha-hastayor-
garānande Vyatīpāte kanyā candre vṛṣe raviḥ /
daśayoge naraḥ snātvā sarva-papaiḥ pramucyate //

Kane says that the *Varāha* P. accepts Tuesday instead of Wednesday (HD. V. i. P. 91) but the actual quotation of *Varāha* P. in the VRJ. p. 165, states that it was on Wednesday on 10th Jyeṣṭha Śu. that the Gaṅgā

highly meritorious. It removes ten kinds of sins.[1] Hence it is called Daśahara.

10. On this day if a delighted devotee takes his holy dip in the Jāhnavī in accordance with the injunctions, he goes to Hari's abode.

11. The tenth day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha is remembered by Manu and others as highly meritorious. Holy dip, Japa, charitable gift, or Homa on that day is the bestower of heavenly goal.

12. The tenth day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa is the bestower of the fulfilment of all hopes. The worship of Śiva, with scents and other articles of worship on this day, is praiseworthy.

13. Observance of fast, taking of food only at night, feeding of Brāhmaṇas, Japa, the charitable gift of gold, cow, etc. performed on this day—all these are destructive of all sins.

14-19. On the tenth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the holy rite called Daśāvatāra[2] (the ten incarnations) is to be observed. After

descended from heaven. The NP. limits the merit of this Vrata to bath in the Gangā but the *Nirṇaya Sindhu* (P. 98), on the authority of the SK.P., extends the merit of *Daśaharā* to both etc. in all big rivers. A festival of the Gaṅgā is celebrated in towns and villages in big rivers like the Krishnā and the Godāvarī in Maharashtra, though not on that big scale as found at Haradwar, Prayāga or Vārāṇasī.

1. The other derivation of Daśaharā is "that which washes off ten kinds of sins". The ten kinds of sins are given in Manu XII. 5-7 as follows :

(1) *Mental Sins* : Coveting another man's wealth, wishing evil to befall others, entertaining heretical ideas,

(2) *Vocal Sins* : harshness of speech, speaking the untruth, back-biting, irrelevent speech.

(3) *Bodily Sins* : misappropriation of another's wealth, injury to living beings, illicit intercourse with another's wife.

This efficacy of *Daśaharā* is endorsed in other Purāṇas also; *vide* Br. P. 63. 15, *Nirṇayasindhu* (p. 98) quotes the SK. P and *Varāha* P to the same effect. The VRJ. (pp. 166 ff) gives details of this *Vrata*.

2. VV. 14-19 describe the *Vrata* in honour of the currently believed ten incarnations of Viṣṇu. The inclusion of the Buddha and Kalki in the list is comparatively late when people forgot that the Buddha was the propagator of a non-Vedic faith.

taking his bath in a water-reservoir (i.e. a tank, a river etc.) and performing Sandhyā etc. and the rite of Ṭarpaṇa to the Devas, sages and Pitṛs, he should, with great concentration, worship ten incarnations (of Viṣṇu) viz. Matsya (the Divine Fish), Kūrma (the Divine Tortoise), Varāha (The boar), Narasiṁha (Man-lion), Trivikrama (the religious student Vāmana), Paraśu-Rāma, Śrī-Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, and Kalki. O Nārada, he (the observer of the Vrata) should worship ten gold images (of these incarnations) in accordance with injunctions. He should then give them to ten excellent Brāhmaṇas after duly honouring them. After observing fast or taking one meal (on that day), he should feed the Brāhmaṇas. After bidding farewell to them, he should enjoy a meal with his friends and relatives. By performing this Vrata with devotion, he shall enjoy all excellent pleasures here. In the end he will go to the eternal Viṣṇuloka, in aerial chariot.

20-22. The tenth day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina is glorified as Vijayā.[1] In the morning the devotee places four cow-dung balls in the courtyard of the house in the form of the horizon (i.e. semicircle). In their midst he should worship the four warriors Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna. Four vessels with lids are taken and smeared with cow-dung. Grains and silver coins are put therein and closed. They are covered with white silken cloth.

Hemādri (*Vrata* I. 1158-61) instructs to begin this *Vrata* on 12th *Mārgaśīrṣa Śu.* VRJ (P. 168) on the authority of the *Bhaviṣyottara P.*, gives a different procedure though the *Vrata* commences on *Bhādrapada Śu*, 10th and the *Vrata* is to be observed for 10 years.

1. VV. 20-25a describe one variety of *Vijayā daśamī Vrata* allied with Rāma but not connected with his victory over Rāvaṇa which forms the basis of the present *Rāmalīlā* festival. This variety is not recorded by Hemādri (*Vrata* I. 970-73), *Nirṇaya sindhu* (PP. 69-70), VRJ. pp. 169-170 or by Kane (HD. V. i. pp. 188-194).

The other variety in VV 25b-31a, which is to be observed by kings or noblemen for securing conquest on the enemies, has been current all over India in slightly different forms. The worship of the *Śamī* tree, royal procession of elephants, horses etc., waving of lights (*Nīrājana*) after return from *Śamī-Pūjana* etc. have been the common features. The NP. does not include the worship of the goddess Aparājitā (recorded in *Dharma-sindhu*, pp.

23. The devotee then worships them in accordance with the injunctions with scents, fragrant flowers, Naivedyas, etc. accompanied by father, mother, brothers, sons, wife and servants.

24-25a. After paying obeisance he feeds the Brāhmaṇas who are duly honoured. By performing this holy rite, the man remains happy throughout the year. O Brāhmaṇa, he shall decisively become flourishing in wealth and grains.

25b-31a. (Another holy rite) On the previous Navamī day the devotee goes to a Śamī tree and chants Mantras : On the afternoon of the Daśamī day, O Brāhmaṇa, the devotee goes again to the Śamī tree which is on the eastern side (of the village etc) and takes mud from the foot of tree. To the accompaniment of songs and instrumental music, he brings the mud to the house. He worships the clay in accordance with the injunctions and arranges his army. He goes out of the village by means of the eastern gate without any perturbation. He should get the image of the enemy prepared by means of leaves, etc. or mentally fancy the same. He should feel mentally delighted that the deity will hit the enemy with an arrow that has its tail of gold. He should then return home at night. Or after making all these arrangements he should proceed against the enemy to curb him. O Brāhmaṇa, this Daśamī rite, performed always in accordance with the injunctions, shall bestow wealth, victory, sons, cows, elephants, horses, goats and sheep in this world. O Nārada, at death he attains heavenly world.

31b-33. One should perform the holy rite of Sārvabhauma-Vrata[1] (Vrata for Sovereignty over the world) on the tenth day

96 ft) though some features in Hemādri (*Vrata* I. pp. 970-971) such as despatching an arrow at the effigy of the enemy or imagining him to be facing oneself, are common.

In Maharashtra probably due to scarcity of Śamī trees, they worship the *Āptā* tree or its branch on the eastern outskirts of the village. Going out of the boundary of the village is the technical *Sīmollaṅghana* (crossing the boundary for "invading" the enemy). People return home in the evening and lights are waved round the men. (*Nīrājana*) by women in the house. They distribute the leaves of the Āptā tree as "gold coins".

1. VV. 31-47 describe the *Sārvabhauma Vrata* primarily meant for kings. A similar *Vrata* is given in the *Varāha* P. 65.1-6 and *Viṣṇudharma*

in the bright half of the month of Kārttika. The devotee either observes complete fast or takes only one meal a day. At midnight, outside the house or the city he offers oblations in all the ten directions with Apūpa (baked pie) etc. On a level spot of ground smeared with cowdung, he draws a mystic diagram of a lotus of eight petals. After worshipping Gaṇeśa and other deities he (wipes off sins) by means of these Mantras.

34. May God Indra, the king of the Devas, the granter of all desired things, destroy the sin that is to my east as a result of my own sinful actions.

35. May God Vahni (fire) the king of all splendours, the granter of all desired things quell the sin that is to my south-east as a result of my own sinful actions.

36. May Yama, the king of Pretas, ghosts, the bestower of all desired things annihilate the sin that is to my south as a result of my own actions.

37. May Nirṛti, the king of Rākṣasas, the bestower of all desired things, wipe off the sin that is to my southwest as a result of my own actions.

38. May Varuṇa, the Lord of aquatic animals, the bestower of all desired things, destroy the sin that is to my west as a result of my own actions.

39. May Vāyu, the king of Maruts (gusts of wind), the bestower of all desired things eradicate the sin that is to my north-west as a result of my own actions.

40. May Soma (Moon), the Lord of Ṛkṣas (constellations) and Yaksas, the bestower of all desired things, quell the sin that is to my north as a result of my own actions.

41. May Īśāna, the lord of Bhūtas (goblins), the granter of all desired things, quell the sin that is to my north-east, as a result of my own actions.

42. May Brahmā (the Lord of the Prajāpatis), the granter of all desired things annihilate the sin that is above, as a result of (my own) actions.

P. III. 164. 1-7. The guardians of the quarters are at times identified with the protectors of the worlds. Manu V.96 mentions Sūrya (the Sun) as the protector of the South-West instead of Nirṛti in the NP.

43. May Ananta, the king of serpents, the granter of all desired things, quell the sin that is stationed below me as a result of my own actions.

44. After offering oblations in the ten directions thus, with great concentration, he should alertly offer oblations to Kṣetrapāla externally.

45. After having completed the rites thus the intelligent devotee should spend the remaining part of the night in mainly auspicious songs, recitation of hymns, Japas etc.

46. In the morning, he should take bath, worship guardians of the worlds (quarters), and honour and feed twelve Brāhmaṇas. He should give them Dakṣinā according to his ability.

47. O Brāhmaṇa, after performing the holy rite thus, the royal devotee shall enjoy all auspicious worldly pleasures. After enjoying heavenly pleasures thereafter, for the duration of a Yuga, he will become an Emperor.

48. On the tenth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the devotee should perform the holy rite of Ārogyaka Vrata[1] (health-giving Vrata). He should worship ten Brāhmaṇas with scents and other things and drink the water with which their feet have been washed.

49-50a. After giving Dakṣiṇā to them, he should bid them farewell. He should take only a single meal. O Brāhmaṇa, after performing this Vrata the devotee attains health in this world. Thanks to the grace of Dharma-Rāja, he rejoices like a Deva in the heaven.

50b-51. On the tenth day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa, he should worship Viśve Devas.[2] They are Kratu,

1. This is a special variety of *Vrata* in the NP. Kane records a number of *Ārogya Vratas* on different *Tithis*, but none of them prescribes the *Tirtha* (water after washing the feet) of Brāhmaṇas. Even the *Vrata* on the Daśamī day prescribes the worship of goddess Lakṣmī and Hari.

2. These gods are supposed to be the sons of *Viśvā*. The list of their names differs e.g. Apte's SK. Dict. p. 523 and MWP. 992 give the following list :

Vasu, Satya, Kratu, Dakṣa, Kāla, Kāma, *Dhṛti*, *Kuru*, *Pururavas* and *Mādravas*—the last four are not found in the NP.-list.

Dakṣa, Vasus, Satya, Kāla, Kāma, Muni, Guru, Vipra and Rām. Keśava has identified himself with these in ten different ways.

52-54. He should make effigies of Darbha grass to represent them as seated in their seats or lying down. O Nārada, he should worship them with scents, incense, lights and Naivedyas. After giving them Dakṣiṇā separately, he should ritualistically bid farewell to them. The gifts that had been offered to them should be given to excellent Brāhmaṇas or to the preceptor. O Brahminical sage, the observer of the Vrata who performs the rite thus, taking in only one meal a day, shall be the enjoyer of pleasures of both the worlds.

55-58a. On the tenth day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, the devotee should observe fast and conquer his sense-organs. He should properly and completely worship the ten Devas called Aṅgiras after making their images in gold. He shall worship them with scents and other Upacāras. They are— Ātmā, Āyus, Manas, Dakṣa, Mada, Prāṇa, Barhiṣmān, Gaviṣṭha, Datta and Satya. O Nārada, as their representatives ten Brāhmaṇas are to be fed with sweet cooked rice. For the purpose of acquiring heavenly world, the devotee should give those Brāhmaṇas the golden image.

58b-62. On the tenth day in the bright half of the last month, the devotee should worship the fourteen Yamas. They are : Yama, Dharmarāja, Mṛtyu, Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla, Sarvabhūtakṣaya, Audumbara, Dadhna, Nīla, Parameṣṭhin, Vṛkodara, Citra and Citragupta. He should properly and correctly worship them with scents and other Upacāras. He shall perform Tarpaṇa three times for each with handful of water mixed with gingelly seeds. O Nārada, thereafter, with a copper vessel he should give Arghya to the sun with the mixture of red sandal, gingelly seeds, raw rice-grains and barley in the waters with the following mantra.

63. "O sun of thousand rays, come O huge mass of splendour, O Lord of the Universe, accept the Arghya given by me with devotion. Take pity on me."

64-66. The devotee should offer Arghya by uttering the above Mantra. He should feed the fourteen Brāhmaṇas and

give them silver coins as Dakṣiṇā. After bidding farewell to them, he should partake of his own food. O Brāhmaṇa, the devotee who performs the holy rite thus, enjoys all worldly pleasures, inaccessible to the Devas, such as sons and riches. At the death of his body, he occupies excellent aerial chariot and attains to Viṣṇu's Loka.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY

The exposition of the Vratas to be observed on Ekādaśi (eleventh) days[1] *(of the lunar fortnight)*

Sanātana said :

1-4. On the eleventh day in either of the fortnights of (any month), O sage, the devotee must desist from taking food.

1. The NP. being a Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa gives full details of Ekādaśi Vrata. It has devoted the whole of *Uttarārdha* in glorification of this Vrata.

The NP. follows *Pūrṇimānta* reckoning. Hence the Ekādaśi in the dark half is treated first. It is not known why *Caitra Ekādaśis* should be an exception and why *Ekādaśi* in *Caitra* Śu. and *Kṛ* are so much bifurcated (*Caitra* Śu in VV 5-8a and *Caitra* Kṛ in VV 80-82)

The following is the Tabular statement of Ekādaśis and the month and fortnight for their performance. The difference of name in the list in HDV. i P. 108 Note 278 is noted in the bracket.

	N. of the lunar Fortnight and month	*N. of the Ekādaśi Vrata*
1.	Caitra Śu.	Kāmadā
2.	,, Kṛ.	Pāpamocani (Varūthini)
3.	Vaiśākha Śu.	Mohini
4.	,, Kṛ.	Varūthini (Aparā)
5.	Jyeṣṭha Śu.	Nirjalā
6.	,, Kṛ	Aparā (Yogini)
7.	Āṣāḍha Śu.	Śayani
8.	,, Kṛ.	Yogini (Kāmikā or Kāmadā)
9.	Śrāvaṇa Śu.	Putradā
10.	,, Kṛ.	Kāmikā (Ajā)

With great concentration, he must construct an auspicious pavilion decorated with flowers of various kinds exquisitely. After taking bath perfectly in accordance with the injunctions, he should observe fast and conquer his sense-organs. With faith and great concentration he should duly worship Viṣṇu with various Upacāras, Japas, Homas and circumambulations. He should also recite different hymns in prayer to the Lord, alongwith songs and instrumental music that captivate the mind. He should glorify the Lord with charming shouts of Jaya (Be victorious). He should prostrate on the ground like a long staff. He should keep awake during the night. (By carrying out all these instructions) he attains the great region of Viṣṇu.

5-8a. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Caitra, the excellent man should observe fast and maintain these observances mentioned hereinafter for these days (the previous and the subsequent days included i.e. the 10th, 11th +12th Tithis). On the Dvādaśī (twelfth) day, he should devotedly worship the eternal Vāsudeva with all the sixteen Upacāras.

Then, he should feed his kinsmen.* After giving Dakṣiṇā

11.	Bhādrapada Śu.	Padmā (Parivartinī)
12.	,, Kṛ.	Ajā (Indirā)
13.	Āśvina Śu.	Pāpāṅkuśā
14.	,, Kṛ.	Indirā (Ramā)
15.	Kārttika Śu.	Prabodhinī
16.	,, Kṛ.	Ramā (Utpatti)
17.	Mārgaśirṣa Śu.	Mokṣā (Mokṣadā)
18.	,, Kṛ.	Utpannā (Saphalā)
19.	Pauṣa Śu.	Putradā
20.	,, Kṛ.	Saphalā (Ṣaṭ-tilā)
21.	Māgha Śu.	Jayā
22.	,, Kṛ.	Ṣaṭ-tilā (Vijayā)
23.	Phālguna Śu.	Āmalakī
24.	,, Kṛ.	Vijayā (Pāpa-mocanī)

VV. 1-4 give general instructions on the common ritual in the *Ekādaśī Vratas.*

*The wording in the next line shows that here the reading should have been *Brāhmaṇān* instead of *bāndhavān.* If the reading be *Vāḍavān* it will do as *Vāḍava*=a Brāhmaṇa.

to them he should bid farewell to them and take food himself. This holy Ekādaśī Vrata is called Kāmadā (the granter of desires). It destroys all sins. O Brāhmaṇa, if observed properly and perfectly, it yields worldly pleasures and salvation.

8b-10. On the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Vaiṣākha, a person should observe, with all formalities (of this Vrata), fast on this Varūthinī (name of this Ekādaśī.) On the next day, he should worship Madhusūdana. The charitable gift of gold, cooked food, cow and virgin on this day is highly commendable. By performing the holy Vrata of Varūthinī (Ekādaśī), the man devoted to the regular requisite observances is liberated from all sins. He attains the region of Viṣṇu.

11-12a. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, the devotee observes fast on this Mohinī Ekādaśī. On the next day, he takes his bath and worships Puruṣottama with scents and other things. By feeding Brāhmaṇas, (thereafter), he shall undoubtedly be liberated from sins.

12b-14a. On the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Jyeṣṭha (which is called Aparā,[1] he should observe fast of the Aparā Ekādaśī, O king,[2] on the Dvādaśī day, he performs the daily prescribed (Nitya) rites and worships Trivikrama. Thereafter, feeding prominent Brāhmaṇas and giving them Dakṣiṇā, he becomes liberated from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's Region (Vaikuṇṭha).

14b-16. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, the holy rite of Nirjalā (Abstention from water) Ekādaśī is observed. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, from the sun-rise to sunrise (i. e. through-out the Ekādaśī day) (not even water is to be taken in). On the twelfth day in the morning, he performs the prescribed daily routine rites and worships Hṛṣīkeśa with all the Upacāras; (thereafter) he feeds

1. As *Aparā* is the name of Ekādaśī which follows Mohinī (HD VI. 1 p. 108 Ft. note 278), the reading in this verse should have been *Samupoṣyāparām* instead of *Samupoṣya parām*; Here *parām* is meaningless and syntactically unrelated to any substantive.

2. This is an obvious quotation, as the epithet *Nṛpa* is not applicable to Nārada

Brāhmaṇas, with devotion. By observing this holy rite, the devotee attains the benefit of twentyfour (ordinary) Ekādaśīs.

17-18. On the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Āṣāḍha, the devotee observes the fast of Yoginī Ekādaśī. On the twelfth day, he performs his daily rites and worships Nārāyaṇa. Then, he feeds leading Brāhmaṇas and offers Dakṣiṇā to them. He attains the benefit of all charitable gifts and rejoices in the abode of Viṣṇu.

19-24. Listen to the injunctions regarding the holy rite on the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha.[1] The devotee observes fast on that day in accordance with the injunctions. He should instal the image of Viṣṇu made of gold or silver, on an auspicious pavilion. The image should be of exquisite workmanship, with the four hands shining with conch, discus, iron club and the lotus. A yellow silk-cloth should be wound round the image. O Brāhmaṇa, the image should be placed on a couch neatly covered with (silk) cloth. Uttering the Mantras he should bathe the Lord with Pañcāmṛta and pure water. The hymn 'Puruṣa Sūkta' (RV. X. 90) is recited. The Upacāras (articles and modes or details of worship) begin with Pādya (offering of water to wash the feet of the Lord) and end with Nīrājana (waving of lights in front of the Lord's image). Then he prays to Hari as follows:[2] "O Lord of the Universe, if you are asleep, this Universe too shall be asleep. When you wake up, the entire Universe consisting

1. For the detailed discussion of the *Vrata vide* HD. V. 109-112. The details of this *Vrata* given in NP. (VV. 19-27) are rather different from these in HD (ibid).

I doubt the Indo-European origin of this Śayani Vrata for lack of evidence in comparative mythology. Kane's other theory viz. the monsoons causing paralysis of activities, journey etc. is more plausible.

In Maharashtra, this is treated as a *Mahā-ekādaśī* and perhaps the biggest pilgrimage is held at Pandharpur on this occasion. One wonders why farmers who are normally very busy at this time of the year, leave aside their agricultural activities and gather at Pandharpur. Is it a continuation of such gathering since the days of food-gathering economy ?

2. This verse (No. 23) is probably a quotation as we find it quoted in the *Dharma Sindhu* (P. 53) and *Nirṇaya Sindhu* (P. 102)

of the mobile and immobile being wakes up." After praying thus in the presence of the Lord, the devout man should adopt regulations (or Vratas) laid down for observance during the period of the Caturmāsya. He should adopt them to the extent of his capacity.

25-26. On the morning of the Dvādaśī day, he should worship Śeṣaśāyin (Lord Viṣṇu reposing on the couch of the body of Śeṣa) with all the sixteen types of Upacāras. He should then feed the Brāhmaṇas and propitiate them with Dakṣiṇās. After that he should take food silently. From that time onwards, O leading Brāhmaṇa, he should worship the Lord with scents and other things every day.

27. By performing this holy rite of "Śayanī-Vrata" of the Lord duly, O Brāhmaṇa, the man enjoys worldly pleasures and Salvations, thanks to the grace of Viṣṇu.

28-31a. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the excellent man performs the holy rite of 'Kāmikā' (also known as Kāmadā) on the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Śrāvaṇa alongwith due observances. On the twelfth day, after performing the daily routine rites, he worships Śrīdhara, Hari, with all the sixteen Upacāras.[1] He then feeds Brāhmaṇas, gives them Dakṣiṇā and bids them farewell. Thereafter, he takes his food alongwith the kinsmen. O Brāhmaṇa, he who thus performs the excellent Kāmikā (Ekādaśī) Vrata obtains

1. The NP. constantly refers to sixteen *Upacāras*. They are as follows : *āvāhana* (invitation), *āsana* (offering a seat), *Pādya* (water for washing feet), *arghya* (respectful offering of water with or without grains of rice, dūrvā grass, flowers mixed in it), *ācamanīya* (offering spoonfuls of water for sipping), *snāna* (*bath*), *vastra* (*cloth*), *yajñopavīta* (the sacred thread). *anulepana* or *gandha* (sandal paste or some fragrant paste), *puṣpa* (decoration with flowers) *dhūpa* (burning of incense), *dīpa* (waving of light), *naivedya* (offering of eatables, food) *tāmbūla* (offering betel-leaves, just after dinner or *naivedya*), *dakṣiṇā* (religious fee or monetary gift), *pradakṣiṇā* (clockwise circumambulation).

Many of these were current in Vedic times for receiving guests and *pitṛs* at the time of *śrāddha* and these were extended to images when idol-worship came in vogue. It is a superstition to attributc all these to Dravidians (For details vide HD. V. i PP. 33-39).

all the cherished desires in this world and attains the greatest region of Viṣṇu.

31b-33. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, the devotee performs the holy rite of "Pavitrā* (prob. an alternative name for Putradā) Ekādaśī" On the Dvādaśī day, he should worship Janārdana strictly adhering to the rules, with all the sixteen Upacāras. Thereafter, he feeds Brāhmaṇas and gives them Dakṣiṇās. He obtains a son endowed with good qualities and then attains Viṣṇu's region. He will be bowed to by all Devas.

34-36a. On the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Bhādrapada, the devotee observes fast of the holy rite named 'Ajā-Ekādaśī'. On the Dvādaśī day, he should worship Upendra with various Upacāras. He should feed Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice and bid farewell to them after giving them Dakṣiṇā. O Brāhmaṇa, he who observes the holy rite in this way with great concentration and devotion to Ajā, enjoys all worldly pleasures. In the end he attains the abode of Viṣṇu.

36b-41a. The devotee has to perform the holy rite of PadmāVrata* (Ekādaśī fast called Padmā) on the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada. After finishing the daily worship, he should perform the rite of Koṭidāna (giving of a crore of things). O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the image installed before is worshipped with great festivities. The image is taken to the water-reservoir and is touched with water and is then worshipped in accordance with the injunctions. It is then brought to the platform and laid to rest on the left side. On the morning of the Dvādaśī day, he worships Vāmana with scents and other things. The Brāhmaṇas are fed, given Dakṣiṇās and bidden farewell to. O Brāhmaṇa, he who

*It is also called *Parivartinī* as Lord Viṣṇu is supposed to have turned on one side during his sleep on this day. (Kane—*HD* V. I. 109). The NP. subscribes to this supposition as v. 39a instructs that the image of Viṣṇu should be laid to rest on the left side.

performs the excellent holy rite of Padmāvrata thus, enjoys all worldly pleasures. In the end he attains release from Saṁsāra.

41b-44. The devotee performs the holy Ekādaśi rite called Indirā, on the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Āśvina. He observes fast and at midday, he performs Śrāddha rite in front of a Śāligrāma stone. O Brāhmaṇa, this is highly pleasing to Viṣṇu. On the next morning of Hari's day, the intelligent devotee worships Padmanābha and feeds Brāhmaṇas. After giving them Dakṣiṇā, he bids farewell to them and takes food himself. The man who performs the holy rite thus, enjoys all desired worldly pleasures and uplifts a crore of his ancestors. In the end he goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

45-47. O Brāhmaṇa, the devotee observes the holy rite called 'Pāśāṅkuśā', on the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina. After observing fast on this day, he should worship Viṣṇu on the day of Viṣṇu (i.e. Dvādaśī day). He then feeds prominent Brāhmaṇas, gives them Dakṣiṇā and after bowing to them devotedly, he bids farewell to them. Thereafter, he takes food himself. The man who performs the holy rite of Pāśāṅkuśa Vrata thus with devotion, enjoys excellent worldly pleasures and attains the Sālokā Mukti i.e. residence in the same region as that of Viṣṇu.

48-50. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the devotee performs the holy rite of Ramā Ekādaśī on the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Kārttika. After duly observing fast on that day, he worships Keśava on the morning of Dvādaśī day. He worships Keśava, the eternal Lord of the Devas, the destroyer of Keśin. He should then feed Brāhmaṇas and bid farewell to them after Dakṣiṇā has been given. O Brāhmaṇa, he who performs the holy rites thus, enjoys all desired pleasures here. He attains to the presence of Ramāpati (Viṣṇu) by means of an aerial chariot ! (This is known as samīpatā Mukti).

51-56a. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, the devotee observes the fast of Prabodhinī Ekādaśī. At night, the devotee wakens up the sleeping Keśava (Viṣṇu) with auspicious songs, with Ṛk, Yajus and Sāman Mantras and with various kinds of instrumental music. He propitiates the Lord presenting him grapes, sugarcane,

pomegranate and other fruits and the plants of banana and Śṛṅgāṭaka (Trapa Bispinosa etc). After the night is over, on the next day, he takes bath and performs his daily routine. He should then worship Gadādāmodara with all the sixteen Upacāras and with the recital of the Puruṣasūkta. After feeding Brāhmaṇas and giving them Dakṣiṇās to their satisfaction, he should bid farewell to them. He shall give that gold image to the preceptor alongwith a cow. He who respectfully performs this Bodhinī Vrata with devotion, enjoys all worldly pleasures and attains the region of Viṣṇu.

56b-59a. On the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the devotee observes fast of Utpannā (or Utpatti) Ekādaśī. On the Dvādaśī day, he should worship Lord Kṛṣṇa with scents and other requisites of services or upacāras. He then feeds leading Brāhmaṇas and gives them Dakṣiṇas. After bidding them farewell, he should take food himself alongwith friends and kinsmen. He who performs the Utpannā (or Utpatti) Ekādaśī Vrata with devotion, rides an aerial chariot and attains the region of Viṣṇu.

59b-62a. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the devotee observes the holy rite of Mokṣā (Mokṣadā) Ekādaśī by fasting. On the Dvādaśī day, in the morning, he worships Ananta who is the embodiment of the Universe, with all the Upacāras. The Brāhmaṇa devotee then feeds the Brāhmaṇas. He bids farewell to them after giving them Dakṣiṇā. He then takes food alongwith the kinsmen. O Brāhmaṇa, by performing this Vrata, he enjoys all the desired worldly pleasures. He uplifts ten generations of his ancestors and ten generations of successors. He then attains Hari.

62b-64a. On the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Pauṣa, the devotee observes the holy Saphalā Ekādaśi rite. On the Dvādaśī day, he worships Acyuta with all Upacāras. After feeding Brāhmaṇas with sweet-meats and giving them Dakṣiṇās, he bids them farewell. O Brāhmaṇa, after performing the Saphalā Ekādaśī Vrata thus in accordance with the injunctions, he enjoys all worldly pleasures here (in this world). In the end, he goes to the region of Viṣṇu.

64b-67a. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa, the devotee observes the holy rite of Putradā

Ekādaśī. On the Dvādaśī day, he should worship the discus-armed Lord with Arghya and other Upacāras. Thereafter, he should feed leading Brāhmaṇas. After giving them Dakṣiṇā, he should bid farewell to them and eat the cooked rice left over, alongwith his loving kinsmen. O Brāhmaṇa, he who performs the holy rite thus, enjoys all desired pleasures, in the end; he rides in an aerial car and goes to Hari's abode (Vaikuṇṭha).

67b-70. On the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Māgha, the devotee observes the holy rite of Ṣaṭtilā Ekādaśī. He takes bath with gingelly seeds; he makes gift of them; he uses them in the Tarpaṇa rite; he performs Homa with them; he eats them and he worships with them on the morning of the Dvādaśī day. After perfectly worshipping Vaikuṇṭha (Viṣṇu) with all the Upacāras, he feeds the Brāhmaṇas. Then he bids farewell to them, after Dakṣiṇā has been duly paid, O Brāhmaṇa, by performing the holy rite, thus in accordance with the injunctions, the devotee, with great concentration, enjoys all desired pleasures here. In the end he attains Viṣṇu's region.

71-73. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, the devotee observes the holy rite of Jayā Ekādaśī. On the day of Hari, in the morning, O Brāhmaṇa, he should worship Puruṣa, the Lord of Śrī. After feeding, giving Dakṣiṇā and bidding farewell to the Brāhmaṇas, he should take in the food left over by them alongwith his kinsmen. He should be pure, in mind and body. O Brāhmaṇa, he who thus performs the holy rite that propitiates Keśava, enjoys excellent pleasures here. In the end, he shall attain the region of Viṣṇu.

74-76. On the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Phālguna, the devotee observes the holy rite of Vijayā Ekādaśī. On the Dvādaśī day, in the morning, he worships Yogīśa (the Lord of Yogins) with scents and other things. He feeds Brāhmaṇas and gives them Dakṣiṇās to their satisfaction. After bidding them farewell he should himself silently take food in the company of his kinsmen. The man who performs the holy rite thus, enjoys the desired pleasures. After death, he goes to Viṣṇu's region. He is well honoured by the Devas.

77-79. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, on the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna, the devotee observes the holy rite of Āmalakī Ekādaśī. On the Dvādaśī day, in the morning, he should worship Puṇḍarīkākṣa with all Upacāras. With excellent cooked food, he should feed the Brāhmaṇas and give them Dakṣiṇā. By performing worship etc. duly on the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna, that is called Āmalakī Ekādaśī, the devotee attains the greatest region of Viṣṇu.

80-82. The eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Caitra is called Pāpamocanikā (that which releases one from sins). Having observed fast on that day, the devotee worships Govinda in the morning on the Dvādaśī day, with all the sixteen Upacāras. He should feed the Brāhmaṇas, give them Dakṣiṇā and bid them farewell. Then he should take food alongwith his kinsmen. O Brāhmaṇa, he who thus performs the holy rite of Pāpamocanikā Vrata attains the world of Viṣṇu by means of a shining aerial chariot.

83. O Brāhmaṇa, thus the salvation-yielding holy rites on the Ekādaśī days in both bright and dark halves (of all the months) have been extolled to you. There is no doubt at all in this (that they are conducive to the attainment of salvation).

84. Since this Vrata is to be observed for three consecutive days, it is glorified as the most excellent of all the Vratas. Hence, it must be known as highly fruitful.

85. O Nārada, the devotee should miss four meals in the course of these three days. On the first day and the third (i.e. on Daśamī and Dvādaśī days) he shall miss one meal each (in the evening). On the day in the middle (i.e. Ekādaśī day) he should miss both the meals.

86-90. Now, I shall recount to you the restraints in regard to this Vrata in the course of these three days.[1] A true devotee

1. VV. 86-90 lay down the restraints and rules to be observed on the three days of *Ekādaśī Vrata*. It is noteworthy that the number of restraints to be observed is the same as the number of Tithi. Thirteen restraints are prescribed for the *Daśamī day* (The 10th *Tithi*), eleven ones for the *Ekādaśī* day, and twelve for the *Dvādaśī* day.

Viṣṇu should always avoid ten things on the Daśamī day :— Bell metal vessel, meat, cooked lentil, Bengal gram, Kodrava grains, greens, wine, food at others' houses, the second meal and sexual intercourse.

He should avoid these eleven things on the Ekādaśi day :- gambling, sleep, chewing the betal leaves, washing the teeth, slandering, backbiting, stealing, injury to others, sexual intercourse, anger and telling lies. He should eschew the following twelve on the Dvādasī day:— Bell metal vessel, meat, wine, honey, oil, conversation with outcaste people who remove ordure, physical exercises, journey, second meal, sexual intercourse, touching the untouchables and cooked lentil.

91-92. A Brāhmaṇa should observe fast with due observances of all the restraints, if he is physically competent. Otherwise, the intelligent devotee should take a single meal. He should not take food during the night, or he should perform the rite of Ayācitavrata (i.e. taking in what is not begged for). On no account should he miss such a Vrata as this.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY ONE

The holy rites to be observed on Dvādaśī (Twelfth) days (in a lunar fortnight)

Sanātana said :

1. Henceforth, O sinless one, I shall recount to you the holy rites to be observed on Dvādaśī (twelfth) days (in a lunar fortnight). On observing these Vratas, in this world a man becomes more beloved of Viṣṇu.

2-10a On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Caitra, the devotee should perform the holy rite of Madanavrata.[1] A pot with no cracks, filled with white raw rice grains

1. VV. 2-10 describe the *Madana-dvādaśī Vrata*. This is recorded by Hemādri (*vrata* I 1194-98) and VRJ. P. 230.

is placed. Different kinds of fruits are placed nearby with stumps ofsugarcane plants. White sandal paste is applied over the pot and it is covered with two white clothes. Various dishes of foodstuffs are also kept nearby and gold according to one's ability is also placed at its side. A copper vessel containing jaggery should be placed above the pot. It is there that Lord Acyuta in the form of Kāma is worshipped with scents and other Upacāras. The devotee observes fast. On the next day in the morning, he should honour a Brāhmaṇa and give all these things to him. He should feed and give Dakṣiṇā to the Brāhmaṇas. After observing this Vrata thus for a year, the devotee should give the preceptor a bed accompanied by all the requisite adjuncts, together with ghee and a cow. A Brāhmaṇa couple should be worshipped, and presented with a gold image of Kāmadeva alongwith a white milch cow and garments. While giving the charitable gifts he should utter : "May Hari in the form of Kāma be pleased". He who observes Madana Dvādaśī Vrata thus, becomes liberated from all sins. He attains equality with Hari.

10b. It is on this very same day that Bhartṛ-Dvādaśika Vrata is also observed.

11-14. A bed is made with clean bed-sheets spread over it. A gold image of Hari accompanied by Śrī is placed over it. A pavilion is made of flowers over it. The observer of the Vrata worships the deity with scents and other things. He keeps awake at night by means of holy dances, songs, and instrumental music. On the next day, in the morning, he should gift away the gold image of Śrīhari alongwith the bed to a Prominent Brāhmaṇa. He should feed the Brāhmaṇas and give them Dakṣiṇās to their satisfaction. The married life of the person who performs the holy rite thus, becomes stable. He enjoys worldly pleasures in the course of seven births as well as the pleasures desired in both the worlds.

15-16. On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, the devotee should observe fast and subdue his sense organs. With great devotion, he worships Mādhava with scents and other Upacāras. He should duly present sweet-cooked rice to a Brāhmaṇa till he is satisfied, along with a water-pot saying "May Mādhava be pleased".

17-19a. On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, the observer of the holy rite should worship Trivikrama with scents and other things. Then he should present Brāhmaṇa with a bowl containing sweet cooked rice. Thereafter, he should take in a single meal (i.e. once in a day). Trivikrama, the Lord of the Devas, becomes pleased with this Vrata. O Nārada, he will grant him extensive pleasures and salvation in the end.

19b-21a. The devotee should feed twelve Brāhmaṇas on he twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha with sweet cooked rice. He should worship them severally with scents and other things in due order. Saying "May Lord Viṣṇu be pleased with me", he should devoutly give them the following things as gifts—garments, staff, sacred thread, ridges, and vessels.

21b-23a On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, the observer of holy rite should worship Śrīdhara with scents and other things. He should feed excellent Brāhmaṇas with cooked rice in curds, and give them silver coins for Dakṣiṇā. After bowing to them, he should bid them farewell saying, : "May Śrīdhara, the Lord of Devas, be pleased with this Vrata."

23b-24. On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada, the observer of the holy rite should worship Vāmana and in his presence feed twelve Brāhmaṇas with milk puddings. By giving gold as Dakṣiṇā, he delights Viṣṇu.

25-27a. On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina, the devotee should worship Padmanābha with scents and other Upacāras. After that in the presence of the Lord, he should feed the Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice. He should present Dakṣiṇā consisting of gold and (supplement it) with clothes. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, satisfied with this Vrata, Padmanābha grants him the boon of going to Śvetadvīpa and the desired bodily pleasures.

27b-35a. On the twelfth day in the dark half of the month of Kārttika the devotee performs the holy rite of Govatsā-Dvādaśī Vrata[1] (the holy rite of cow and its calf). With fragrant sandal

1. VV. 276-35a describe a variety of *Vrata* different from the one recorded in HD, V. i i.e. in the *Bhaviṣya P.* or Hemādri (*Vrata* I. 1083-84).

paste and other things, the devotee draws the figure of a cow alongwith her calf. He then worships it with flower garlands. With flowers, raw rice-grains and gingelly seeds he prepares the Arghya in a copper vessel in accordance with the injunctions, O Nārada, the devotee should offer the Arghya at the feet of the cow uttering the following Mantra : "O Mother, O Mother of cows, born of the milk-ocean, bowed to by Devas and Asuras, O Goddess identical with the Devas, decorated by all the Devas, kindly accept the Arghya. Obeisance be to you". Then he should offer Vaṭakas (pies) prepared from black gram and other pulses, as Naivedya. Their number may be five, ten or one in accordance with one's affluence. (The Mantra for Naivedya) "O Surabhi (divine cow), you are the mother of the Universe. You are always stationed at the feet of Viṣṇu (in the region of Viṣṇu). O Goddess identical with the Devas, please accept the mouthful of morsel given by me; O Goddess identical with the Devas, decorated by the Devas, O Mother Nandinī (Divine cow), make my desire fruitful."

O excellent Brāhmaṇa, on that day the devotee should avoid foodstuffs fried in oil or cooked in mudpots; he should avoid cow milk, ghee, curds and butter-milk also.

35b-38. On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada, O Brāhmaṇa, the devotee should worship Lord Dāmodara with scents and other Upacāras. With great concentration, he should feed the Brāhmaṇas twelve in number with cooked rice in His (the Lord's) presence. Then, with great pleasure, he should offer them water pots duly worshipped, filled with water and accompanied by areca nuts, sweet-meats and gold. If the rite is performed thus, the devotee becomes a favourite of Viṣṇu. He enjoys all worldly pleasures. There is no doubt in this that on death he obtains Sāyujya (identity) with Viṣṇu.

39-42. The rite of Nīrājana vrata[1] is also recommended, to be observed on this day. Understand it from me. The devotee

1. The NP. gives two types of *Nīrājana Vrata*. VV. 39-43 are for common people and VV. 44-50 for Kings and nobles. It is a *Śānti Vrata*. Kane records other varieties of this *Vrata* (HD. V. 1. 334-335).

adorns (with ornaments) the Lord of the Universe, who has thus got up from his slumber. At night-fall the devotee bedecks himself and kindles fresh fires. He worships the Lord by means of Mantras and performs Homa in the fire kindled by a silver lamp that is worshipped by the people, with scents, fragrant flowers etc. O sage, the devotee should perform the Nīrājana (waving of the lights) rite to Hari with that silver lamp. There itself he should perform the Nīrājana rite for all these in the following order viz : to Lakṣmī who follows him, to Brahmāṇī, Gaurī, to Yakṣa, to Gaṇapati, to planets, to Mothers, to manes, to mountains and to all the serpents.

43. To cows, he should perform the Nīrājana (waving of lights) rite and to buffaloes etc. other Maṅgala (auspicious) rites, with shouts like namaḥ (obeisance), Jaya (be victorious) etc. and with the sounds of bells, conchs etc.

44-50. In this great festival of waving of lights, there should be tumultuous noise of the cows with their horns smeared with saffron and their limbs painted with diverse kinds of colours. The king should be accompanied by the chief priest, ministers and servants. He should duly worship horses endowed with all auspicious characteristic signs, the elephants overwhelmed by ichor in their rut, and the royal paraphernalia such as the umbrella etc. The auspicious character of atmosphere shall be increased with the sounds of conchs, and musical instruments. The king, adorned properly should occupy a newly made throne studded with various jewels. Then a courtesan or a woman of a noble family endowed with all auspicious characteristics should, slowly, perform the Nīrājana rite above the head of the king. This rite is a great Śānti (that which subdues and pacifies evils). It should be performed every year by the king or any other rich man who wishes for good health throughout the year. O Brāhmaṇa, if the excellent Śānti rite named Nīrājana is performed in any country, city or village, the ailments of the people therein are quelled and cured.

51-54a. The excellent holy rite of the Sādhya Vrata[1] is

1. This *Vrata* of semi-divine beings called *Sādhya* is recorded by Hemādri (*CC-Vrata* I. 1173) on the authority of *Viṣṇudharmottara* (III. 181.1-3)

to be observed on the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. The Sādhyas are twelve in number. They are stated as follows : Manobhava, Prāṇa, Nara, Yāta (v.l. Apāna) Vīryavān, Citi, Haya, Nṛpa (v.l. Naya) Haṁsa, Nārāyaṇa, Vibhu and Prabhu. These shall be represented by raw rice grains and worshipped with scents, fragrant flowers etc. He should then feed twelve leading Brāhmaṇas. Good Dakṣiṇās are to be given to them. He should then bid farewell to them saying, 'May Nārāyaṇa be pleased.'

54b-61a. On the very same day, the holy rite of Dvādaśāditya Vrata[1] is known to be observed. The intelligent devotee should worship the twelve Ādityas viz : Dhātā, Mitra, Aryamā, Pūṣā, Śakra, Aṁśa, Varuṇa, Bhaga, Tvaṣṭṛ, Vivasvān, Savitṛ and Viṣṇu. Every month, on the twelfth day in the bright half, he should assiduously worship them and spend the year thus. At the conclusion of the holy rite, he should worship twelve gold images in accordance with the injunctions. He should feed twelve excellent Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice. The observer of the holy rite should honour them separately and offer the gold image to each. By performing the Vrata, called Dvādaśāditya Vrata thus, the devotee attains the world of the sun and enjoys the pleasures therein for a long time. Then, he is born on the Earth among human beings as a pious soul, devoid of ailments. Thereafter, thanks to the merit of the Vrata, he shall accomplish the Vrata again (i.e. he shall perform it successfully again) O excellent Brāhmaṇa, thanks to its merit, he pierces the orb of the sun and attains the Brahman which is unsullied, formless and free from mutually clashing pairs (e.g. pleasure, pain etc).

61b-67a. On this very same day is to be observed the Akhaṇḍa Dvādaśī Vrata.[2] The devotee gets the replica of

1. Also called *Kāmadeva Vrata* in HD. V. i., P. 318 on the authority of *CC. Vrata* I. 1173.

2. Hemādri on the authority of *Viṣṇudharmottara* extends this efficacy of removing the *Vaikalya* (deficiency) in performing penance or even sacrifices (*Vrata* I. 1117-1124). AP. Ch. 190 limits the efficacy to seven births only (VV. 3 & 6), a view endorsed by *Garuḍa* P. 118.

Hemādri recommends another *Vrata* of the same name for the same purpose, but it starts on *Āśvina Śu* 11. (Ibid. *Vrata* I. 1103-1105).

Janārdana made in gold. He should worship it with scents and fragrant flowers as well as other things. In his presence, he should feed Brāhmaṇas, twelve in number, every month. He should take food only at night and subdue his sense-organs. At the end of the year he worships that image in accordance with the injunctions and gives it to the preceptor alongwith a cow. He should pray thus: "O Lord, if, in the previous hundred births, any Vrata performed by me is broken, may it be rendered unbroken, thanks to your Grace." Then he should feed twelve leading Brāhmaṇas with milk puddings alongwith sugar-candies. He should give gold pieces as Dakṣiṇā and make obeisance to them. O Brāhmaṇa, after observing the Vrata thus and propitiating Janārdana, he shall go to Viṣṇu's great region by means of a golden aerial car.

67b-76a. On the twelfth day in the dark half of the month Pauṣa, the holy rite Rūpavrata[1] (vrata for beauty) is said (to be observed). On the previous Daśamī day, the observer of the holy rite should duly take his bath and collect cow-dung. O Brāhmaṇa, it should be of a white cow or that of a cow of a single breast. It should be gathered from the ether itself (i.e. before it reaches the ground after being evacuated by the cow). O Nārada, he should make one hundred and eight balls out of the dung, and dry them in the sun after keeping them in a copper vessel or a mud pot. On the Ekādaśī day he should observe fast and worship the image of Viṣṇu made of gold, in accordance with the injunctions. He should keep awake during the night by means of very auspicious songs, instrumental music, recitation of hymns, japas, etc. On the Dvādaśī day, in the morning, he should place the image on a vessal full of gingelly seeds. This latter vessel should be placed on a pot full of water. He should then worship it by means of all Upacāras. By means of attrition (or friction of wooden pieces) and other methods he should kindle a fresh fire. The intelligent devotee shall worship duly and perform Homas with the cow-dung balls one by one, alongwith gingelly seeds and ghee, after uttering the twelve-

1. A special Vrata in the NP not recorded by Kane.

syllabled Mantra belonging to Viṣṇu viz. Oṁ namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya. When hundred and eight oblations are completed he should perform Pūrṇāhuti. With an affable mind and great pleasure, he should feed Brāhmaṇas with milk puddings. He should offer the image to the preceptor alongwith the water pot. In accordance with his ability, he should give Dakṣiṇā to the Brāhmaṇas. He should bid them farewell after bowing to them. By performing the holy rite respectfully, the devotee, whether it is a man or a women, attains the blessedness of great beauty. No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

76b-85. On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa, the holy rite of Sujanma-Dvādaśī Vrata,[1] (the holy rite for the attainment of good birth and pedigree) is to be observed. After taking the holy bath the devotee takes the vow of Vrata for the whole year. After drinking water from a cow's horn, at the outset, he should circumambulate the cow. Thereafter, every month, on the twelfth day in the bright half, he should offer charitable gifts (as follows) :— A Prastha measure of ghee, four Prasthas of grains and barley, two Ratikās (i.e. the weight of the seed of the Gunja plant (Abrus precatorious) of gold (1-16) grains, half an Āḍhaka of gingelly seeds, a potful of milk (or water) a Māṣa weight of silver, and sweet cooked-rice till satiety; umbrella and half a Māṣa of gold, a Prastha measure of excellent molasses; a Pola weight of Sandal, a fine thin cloth measuring five Hastas, these are the articles to be given as charitable gifts month by month. He should feed himself on the following :— cow's urine, water, ghee, four kinds of green vegetables well cooked, cooked barley grains mixed with curds, gingelly seeds with ghee and sugar, water from the Kuśa grass and milk. After performing this holy rite for a year, the devotee should get the image of the sun made in gold. He should place it on a flat copper vessel, worship it in accordance with the injunctions, and give it to the preceptor alongwith a cow. He should then bow down to him. Then

1. Hemādri recommends this vrata on the authority of *Viṣṇu-dharmottara* P. (*CC-Vrata.* 1174-75).

twelve Brāhmaṇas should be fed and presented with the due Dakṣiṇās. O Brāhmaṇa, he who performs the holy rite thus, takes his birth in a noble family. He shall be free from ailments. He shall be affluent in wealth and food-grains. His sense-organs shall be unimpaired (i.e. he shall be sound in body).

86-89a. On the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, O Brāhmaṇa, the devotee shall duly and devoutly worship the Śālagrāma stone and place a piece of gold in its mouth. It is then placed in a silver vessel and covered with two white cloths. The devotee should then give this to a Vedic Scholar and thereafter feed him with milk-pudding along with sugar-candy and ghee (in a quantity) that is beneficial. After observing this, he should take only a single morsel a day. He should be interested in meditating on Viṣṇu. After enjoying all desired pleasures here, he attains the abode of Viṣṇu.

89b-91a. On the twelfth day in the bright half of the final month (i.e. Phālguna), the devotee should worship the golden image of Hari with scents, fragrant flowers etc. He should then give it to a Brāhmaṇa, knower of the Vedas. After feeding Brāhmaṇas, twelve in number, and giving them Dakṣiṇā, he should bid them farewell; thereafter, he should take food alongwith his kinsmen.

91b-92. The following eight Dvādaśīs are days on which one should observe fast as they remove sins. The Dvādaśīs are Trispṛśā, Unmīlinī, Pakṣavardhinī, Vañjulī, Jayā, Vijayā, Jayantī and Aparājitā.

Śri Nārada said :

93. O holy Brāhmaṇa, what is the characteristic feature of these Dvādaśīs ? What is the benefit thereof ? Kindly explain these things to me as well as other things that may also be equally meritorious.

Sūta said :

94. On being asked thus by Nārada, Sanātana, the excellent Brāhmaṇa sage praised his brother, a great devotee of the Lord and said :

Sanātana said :

95. O brother, the question has been pertinently put by you who clear the doubts of good men. I shall recount the characteristics and the benefit of the great Dvādaśīs separately.

(1) *Tri-spṛśā* :

96. If Ekādaśī ceases to be, before the sunrise, the Dvādaśī is called Trispṛśā (touching three[1].) It is highly benevolent.

97. O Nārada, he who observes fast on this day and worships Govinda, certainly attains the benefit of a thousand horse-sacrifices.

(ii) *Un-milini* :

98. If at the Aruṇodaya time (dawn), the Ekādaśī Tithi is over-lapped by Daśamī, that day is eschewed and fast is observed on the following Dvādaśī day (This is called Unmīlinī – that which opens).

99. If on the Unmīlinī day, the devotee worships Vāsudeva perfectly in accordance with the injunctions, he derives the benefit of a thousand Rājasūya-sacrifices.

(iii) *Vañjulikā* :

100-102. When at the time of sunrise, the night touches Ekādaśī, it shall be avoided and the subsequent Dvādaśī which is called Vañjulikā[2] shall be the day on which the devotee shall fast always. On this day, the devotee should worship Lord Saṁkarṣaṇa with scents and other Upacāras devoutly. He is the great Lord who bestows fearlessness or Mokṣa on all. This great Dvādaśī yields the benefit of all Kratus i.e. sacrifices. It is said to be the remover of all sins. It bestows all riches.

1. Three *tithis* are 'touched' on this day: *Ekādaśi* before sunrise, *Dvādaśī* all the day and *Trayodaśī* in the last part of that night. Hence the name *Tri-spṛśā*.

2. This (*Vañjulikā*) *dvādaśī* exists the whole of one civil day (from sunrise to sunset) and extends over the next day, so that one can fast and have *pāraṇā* on the same *Tithi*—vide *Nirṇaya Sindhu*, p. 48, *Smṛti Kaustubha* 252-253.

103-104. O Brāhmaṇa, when Kuhu (new moon) and Rākā (full Moon) become increased (i.e are of a longer duration), the Dvādaśī is called Pakṣavardhanikā (that which increases the duration of fortnight) and it is highly beneficial. On that day the devotee should worship Lord Pradyumna, the Lord of the Universe, the bestower of all prosperity and the increaser of direct sons and grandsons.

105. If, in the bright half, Dvādaśī coincides with the constellation Maghā it is called Jayā.[1] It conquers all enemies.

106. On this day, the devotee should worship Lord Aniruddha, the husband of Ramā, the bestower of all cherished desires of men and the granter of all blessedness.

107-108. If, in the bright half, Dvādaśī coincides with the constellation Śravaṇa, it is called Vijayā. On that day the devotee should worship Gadādhara, the bestower of all happiness for ever, the greatest resort for all pleasures. O Brāhmaṇa, by observing fast on that day, a man shall attain the benefit of pilgrimage of all holy centres.

109. If, in the bright half, Dvādaśī coincides with the constellation of which Brahmā is the presiding deity [Rohiṇī ?] it is highly meritorious. It is remembered by the name 'Jayantī'.

110-111a. On this day the devotee should worship Lord Vāmana the bestower of Siddhis on men. O leading Brāhmaṇa, if fast is observed on this day, it yields the benefit of all Vratas.

If yields the benefit of all charitable gifts; it yields worldly pleasures and salvation.

111b-113. If, in the bright half, Dvādaśī coincides with the constellation Puṣya it is called Aparājitā. It is the

1. The NP associates the following *Dvādaśīs* in the bright halves of the month with the following *Nakṣatras* coinciding on that day :

N. of Dvādaśī	*Nakṣatra*
Jayā	Maghā
Vijayā	Śravaṇa
Jayantī	Rohiṇī
Aparājitā	Puṣya

Expert opinions differ. For example *Nirṇaya Sindhu*, p. 48 associates the constellation *Puṣya* with Jayā, *Punarvasū* with Jayantī.

bestower of all knowledge. On this day the devotee should worship Lord Nārāyaṇa, devoid of ailments, the cause of liberation (severance) from the bondage of worldly existence, the ocean of perfect knowledge. O Brāhmaṇa, by the observance of fast alone on this day, people will be liberated.

114. If, Dvādaśī in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha coincides with the constellation Anurādhā, two Vratas must be observed. There is no fault since the presiding deity is the same.

115. Similarly, in the bright half of the month Bhādrapada, if Ekādaśī coincides with the constellation Śravaṇa and if Dvādaśī coincides with the constellation Revatī in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, two Vratas (viz. Ekādaśī and Dvādaśī are to be observed.

116-117. O leading Brāhmaṇa, in cases other than these, only one meal is taken on Dvādaśī day. This is the natural Vrata laid down and it is destructive of sins. Since the Vrata of Ekādaśī is always in conjunction with that of Dvādaśī no rite of Udyāpana is laid down. This Vrata has to be performed throughout one's life.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYTWO

The Vratas to be observed
on Trayodaśī (thirteenth day of the lunar fortnight)

Sanātana said :

1. Henceforth, therefore, I shall relate to you comprehensively the Vratas to be observed on Trayodaśī days (i.e. thirteenth day of lunar fortnights). On observing these Vratas with devotion, the man becomes elegant and highly blessed in the world.

2-3a. On the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Caitra, an image of Madana is made with sandal

paste. After worshipping it assiduously, the devotee should waft it with a fan. Kāma excited thereby causes the multiplication of sons and grandsons.

3b-4. The worship of Anaṅga too is to be celebrated on this day. O leading sage, understand it. The devotee should draw the figure of Anaṅgas on a wooden plank with saffron, turmeric and red powder. He should be depicted as endowed with the love of Rati, smart and elegant and holding the flowery arrows and bow.

5. At midday, he should worship Kāmadeva, Vasanta (presiding deity of the spring), Vājivaktra (the horse-faced Lord Viṣṇu) and the bull-bannered Lord Śiva with devotion, by means of scents, garlands, ornaments and silken garments.

6-8. He should propitiate them with various kinds of foodstuffs. O Nārada, in the meantime he repeats this Mantra "Obeisance to Māra, Kāma, the deity of Kāmadeva, the exciter of the minds of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Indra." Then in front of him, he should worship Aṅganāpatī (the husband of a woman) with devotion, garments, garlands, ornaments and other things. He should regard that he (the Brāhmaṇa so worshipped) is Kāma himself. He should then worship a Brāhmaṇa couple with scents, garments and ornaments.

9. O Brāhmaṇa, he who performs the great festival thus, every year, becomes always delighted and well-nourished at the advent of the spring.

10-12a. Or he should worship the following (twelve forms of Kāma month by month till the year comes to a close : Madana, Hṛdbhava, Kāma, Manmatha, Ratipriya, Anaṅga, Kandarpa, (the god with the epithet) Makaradhvaja, Kusumāyudha, Manobhava, Viṣameṣu and Mālatīpriya. O Brāhmaṇa he should worship these twelve forms of Kāmadeva.

12b-13. The charitable gift of a she-goat is also recommended. After taking a holy dip in the river in accordance with the injunctions, the devotee should give milch goat to an indigent householder. Thanks to this charitable gift, he is not reborn in this world.

14. If this Trayodaśī coincides with Saturday, it is remembered as Mahāvāruṇī. If the devotee is able to get an

opportunity to take bath in the Gaṅgā, it is more efficacious than a crore such baths at the juncture of solar eclipses.

15. This is an auspicious combination in regard to the worship of Kāma, viz : the constellation of Śatabhiṣak, Saturday and the bright half of the month of Caitra. It is famous by the name of Mahāmahā.[1] It yields salvation to a crore of the members of his family.

16-18a. On the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, the holy rite of Kāmadevavrata is to be observed. The devotee should observe fast and worship Kāma with scents etc. Thereafter, every month, on the thirteenth day in the bright halves, he should perform the holy rite in the same manner. At the end of the year, in order to achieve the Sāṅgatva (the status of having the complete fulfilment of the Vrata) of the holy rite, he should give a cow bedecked with ornaments to a Brāhmaṇa after duly honouring him.

18b-22a. The holy rite of a Daurbhāgya-Śamana-Vrata[2] (i.e. the holy rite for quelling misfortunes) is to be observed on the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha. The devotee should take the holy dip in the river water and worship the following three plants growing in clean spots : the white Mandāra, the white Arka, (the sun-plant) and the red Karavīra (the oleander). Gazing at the sun in the sky, he should utter this mantra and pray : "O Mandāra, O Arka, O Karavīra, you are all born in the family of the sun. Worshipped by me, quell my misfortune; obeisance be to you all." If any one devotedly worships the three plants thus every year, his misfortune is quelled. No doubt need be entertained in this regard.

22b-28a. On the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha, the devotee should take in only one meal a day. According to his ability, he should get the image of Umā

1. The complete name of the *Vrata* is *Mahāmahā Vāruṇī vide* HD. V. i. 405-406.

2. This *Vrata* shows how the cult of 'tree-worship' of Pre-Aryans in India was observed in Hinduism. A number of trees e.g. The Pippala (Aśvattha), Vaṭa Bilva, Tulasi-Aśoka (*vide* VV. 41-45 below) and others have been firmly established as 'deities' in Puranic Hinduism.

and Maheśvara made in gold, silver or clay. The goddess and the Lord of the universe are represented as seated respectively on a lion and on a bull. O Nārada, the images are installed and consecrated in a temple or in a cowpen or in the house of a Brāhmaṇa, by the divine Mantras. Then the worship is continued for five days and the Vrata (vow) of taking a single meal is kept up. On the Tṛtīyā (third) day, the devotee takes his bath in the morning and worships the deities once again. The images are to be given to a Brāhmaṇa who is a master of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas (ancillaries of Vedas). This Vrata is continued from year to year for full five years. At its end, he should give those images (to a Brāhmaṇa) alongwith a pair of cows, If the devotee, whether a man or a woman, performs this auspicious Vrata thus, he never experiences a break in the conjugal love in the course of seven births.

28b-32. The auspicious, holy rite of Ratikāma-vrata is to be observed on the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa. It prevents widowhood of ladies. It is conducive to the increase in the number of children, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the virgin or the woman devotee observes fast. The images of Rati and Kāma are made of copper, clay, gold or silver and placed in a similar vessel. She should then properly (according to injunctions) worship them with scents etc. Then she invites a Brāhmaṇa couple for the following Caturdaśī day. After honouring them and feeding them, she should give them images alongwith monetary gifts. This excellent Vrata is continued for fourteen years. For completing the Vrata, the images are to be given along with a pair of cows.

33-40. The holy rite of go-tri-rātra[1] is to be observed on the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada. The image of Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa is made of gold or silver. On an auspicious Maṇḍala (mystic diagram) of a lotus of eight petals, the image is to be placed on a pedestal covered with a

1. Kane records three varieties of *Go-tri-rātra Vrata* out of which this is the second and is described by Hemādri (*Vrata* II. 293-303). It is a synthesis of Viṣṇu-worship and cow-worship.

cloth, after bathing the image with Pañcāmṛta. He should duly worship the deity with scents and other things. After the rite of waving the light, (Ārātrika) he should make a gift of a pot of water and cooked rice. This rite is performed for three days. At the conclusion of the Vrata, he should worship the deity for a month. O Nārada, after gathering enough wealth, he should offer it as gift alongwith this Mantra :— "When the great ocean was being churned, five cows were born. Nandā is in the middle of them. Repeated Obeisance to that cow." After circumambulating the cow, he should give it to a Brāhmaṇa with this Mantra :— "May cows be in front of me. May cows be behind me. May cows be on my sides. I stay in the midst of the cows." Thereafter, he should duly honour a Brāhmaṇa couple and feed them. After honouring them suitably, the devotee should give them an image of Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa. One shall obtain from the holy rite of Gotrirātravrata, the same benefit as one obtains by performing thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūyas.

41-45. The holy rite of Tri-rātāśoka-Vrata[1] is to be observed on the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina. The replica of the Aśoka tree is made in gold. The woman devotee observes fast. After worshipping the image in accordance with the injunctions, she should circumambulate it for a hundred and eight times every day. O Brāhmaṇa, she should repeat this mantra with respect—"O Aśoka, formerly you have been created by Hara, the merciful deity ! You are the cause of rendering help to the whole world. O favourite one of Śiva, be gracious unto me." On the third day thereafter, she should worship the bull emblemed deity on that tree, in accordance with the injunctions. A Brāhmaṇa should be fed and given this as a gift. The woman who observed the holy rite thus, is never visited by widowhood. She will be blessed with sons, grandsons, etc. She will also be the great beloved of her husband.

1. This is an amalgamation of the ancient cult of tree-worship and Śaivism. This blesses one with *Saubhāgya* (life on one's husband) and progeny. Kane records a number of *Saubhāgya Vratas* (HD. V. i. 455-57) but this is not included therein.

46-47. The devotee should take only one meal on the thirteenth day in the dark half of the month of Kārttika, and with great concentration, he should light an oil lamp and assiduously worship it. Thereafter, he should keep it outside his front door saying "May Yama be pleased with me". O leading Brāhmaṇa, if this is done, one is not afflicted by Yama.

48-51 O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the devotee should take a single meal on the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika. At sunset, he should take bath again and observing silence, light a thousand, a hundred or a row of thirty-two lamps for Śiva. O Brāhmaṇa, he should do so with great concentration. He should light the lamp with ghee. With scents and other things he should worship Śiva. O Nārada, he should propitiate the Lord with fruits of various kinds and other items of Naivedya. Then, he should eulogise Śiva, the Lord of the Devas, with the following hundred names.[1] Those names, the bestowers of all desired benefits, are being detailed (as follows) :

52. Obeisance to Rudra, the terrible, to the bluenecked God, to the Creator, to one with matted hair, to the Lord of the Devas, bow to Vyomakeśa (one whose tresses constitute the firmament.)

53. Hail to the bull-emblemed one, to Soma (God accompanied by Umā), obeisance to Somanātha. Obeisance to Digambara (i.e. one with the quarters for garments i.e. Naked) ; Obeisance to Bhṛṅga; Obeisance to the deity who causes plentitude.

54. Bow to the deity full of penance (Tapas). Obeisance to the pervaded one. Obeisance to Śipiviṣṭa (pervaded by rays)

1. This 'Century of Rudra's names' bears a strong influence of the Fifth Prapāṭhaka in the IV Kāṇḍa of the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, popularly known as *Rudrādhyāya*. The so called *Namakas* beginning with *namas te Rudra manyave* etc. have subsequently strongly influenced the 'century of names' and 'Thousand of names' of Rudra or god Śiva first, then Viṣṇu down to a river like the Gaṅgā.

It is significant that the author of the NP is not a fanatic Vaiṣṇava like his later descendants in the south. He treats fairly both the deities, as they are but two names of the Supreme Deity, *Para Brahman*.

Salutations to one fond of serpents. Obeisance to Vyāla. and to the Lord of serpents (Vyāla).

55. Hail to the supporter of the Earth, obeisance to (the god of the form of) Vyoma (ether), to the Lord of Paśus and to the lion that destroyed the three Puras (cities) (of asuras). Obeisance to Śārdūla (Tiger), Obeisance to Ṛṣabha (the bull, the chief).

56. Obeisance to Mita (the measured one), to Mitanātha (to the Lord of the measured ones); to Siddha (one who has realised the soul), to Parameṣṭhin (one stationed in the highest being), Obeisance to one who is sung about by the Vedas; to one who is concealed in the Vedas; Obeisance to one who is worthy of being kept as a secret in the Vedas.

57. Hail to the long one, to one of a long form, to one of large objects; to the greater one (than all); obeisance to the deity in whom the universe is installed; obeisance to one of the form of the sky.

58. Obeisance to one who causes welfare; obeisance to one of special nature; obeisance to Śiṣṭa (the disciplined one); to Paramātman (the reatest soul), to one who wears the elephant's hide and to one who split the demon Andhaka.

59. Obeisance to one who is blue, red and white (in complexion), to one who is the favourite of Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa; to the Lord fond of devotion, to the destroyer of the Yajña, to the unchanging one.

60. Hail to you, O Mahādeva, to Maheśa; to Hara, to the three-eyed one; obeisance to Triveda (one described in three Vedas). Repeated obeisance to one who is the embodiment of the Vedas.

61. Obeisance to the Artha (wealth), to one whose form is Artha, to one who is in the highest reality; obeisance to one whose form is the Universe, to the Universe itself, to one who is verily the Lord of the Universe.

62. Obeisance to Śaṅkara, to Kāla, to one of the form of the units of Kāla, obeisance to Arūpa (one without form), to Virūpa (the deformed), to the subtlest of the subtle.

63. Obeisance to you the resident of the cremation ground, to the wearer of the hide garment; to one with the moon for crest jewel, obeisance to one who has resorted to Rudrabhūmi (i.e. cremation ground).

64-66. Obeisance to Durga (very difficult to know), to Durgapāra (one who is on the other side of Saṁsāra), to the witness of the limbs of Durgā, obeisance to one of the form of Liṅga, to Liṅga and to the Lord of Liṅgas, obeisance to one of the form of Prowess; Obeisance to one whose object is prowess. Repeated salutes to the cause of causes, to you, the conqueror of Death, to one of the form of the self-born; obeisance to the three-eyed one; to the bluenecked, obeisance to one full of splendour; to one united to Gaurī and the cause of auspiciousness.

67. O Brāhmaṇa, this is the century of names glorifying the attributes of the Pināka-bearing Lord. The devotee should recite this, make circumambulation and go back to his own abode.

68. O Brāhmaṇa, by performing this holy rite, the devotee enjoys all worldly pleasures here, thanks to the grace of Mahādeva. In the end he shall attain the region of Śiva.

69-71. On the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the devotee should duly worship Anaṅga who had become so, due to his contact with Śiva. He should worship him thrice or once per day. After worshipping with scents and other Upacāras in accordance with the injunctions, he should feed a Brāhmaṇa couple in a pot or on an auspicious cloth. Then, he should give them Dakṣiṇā and take only a single meal. If this vrata is duly performed, O prominent Brāhmaṇa, the devotee becomes the object of blessedness on Earth, thanks to the grace of Mahādeva.

72. The devotee shall worship Hari—Acyuta on the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa. For the achievement of everything, he should give a pot of ghee to a leading Brāhmaṇa.

73-75a. O Brāhmaṇa, the holy rite of Māgha snāna is to be observed for three days beginning with the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Māgha. It is conducive to

the attainment ofmany desired benefits. On this earth even with a thousand horse-sacrifices, that benefit cannot be attained, which one gets on taking the holy dip in Prayāga for these three days in the month of Māgha. The holy dip, Japa, Homa and charitable gifts on this day yields endless benefits.

75b-84. On the thirteenth day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna, the devotee observes fast. After bowing to the Lord of the Universe at the outset, he performs the holy rite of Dhanada Vrata.[1] The picture of the great king, the Lord of the Yakṣas, is painted in colours on a cloth. The devotee worships the Lord with scents and other Upacāras with noble emotions of devotion in the mind. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, in this same manner, he should worship the deity every month on the thirteenth day in the bright half, after observing fast or taking a single meal. At the end of the Vrata he gets the image of the Lord ofwealth made along with the image of the lord of Nidhis (Treasure) made in gold. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, with all the sixteen Upacāras, with the ablutions with Pañcāmṛta etc. and with different kinds of Naivedyas, he should with great concentration and devotion worship the deity. O Brāhmaṇa, thereafter, he adorns a cow with its calf by means of cloths, garlands, scents and ornaments. He then gifts it away to a knower of the Vedas. He feeds twelve or thirteen Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice. The preceptor is propitiated with clothes and other things and the gold image (Kubera) is given to him. According to his ability, he should give Dakṣiṇā to the Brāhmaṇas, bow to them and bid farewell to them. The intelligent devotee, thereafter, takes his food alongwith friends and kinsmen. O Brāhmaṇa, if the Vrata is performed thus, the indigent devotee attains great wealth. He rejoices in the world. He becomes well-known on the Earth as another Rājarāja (King of Kings or Kubera).

1. This is the *Dhana Vrata* given in the *Viṣṇu-dharmottara* III. 184. 1-3 and quoted by Hemādri as *Nanda-Vrata*. What Hemādri calls *Dhanada Vrata* (Vrata I. 1161-62), begins on the 11th of Mārgaśīrṣa Śu. though both have Kubera as the deity to be propitiated.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYTHREE

Description of the Vratas to be observed on Caturdaśi (fourteenth day in a lunar fortnight)

Sanātana said :

1. O Nārada, listen. I shall recount to you the holy rites to be observed on the Caturdaśī (fourteenth) days (of lunar fortnights). On observing these holy rites, a man shall attain his cherished desires in this world.

2-4a. On the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Caitra, magnificent worship of Śiva should be performed with saffron, agallochum, sandal paste, scents, and other things, clothes and ornaments. Erecting the canopy, the banner and the umbrellas, the mothers are to be worshipped. O Brāhmaṇa, by performing the worship thus alongwith the observance of fast or taking a single meal on that day, the man obtains merit more than that of a horse-sacrifice, on this Earth.

4b-5a. On this very same day, the devotee should perform Damanārcā (worship by means of Damanaka leaves and fragrant flowers). When the Vrata is concluded the devotee should dedicate the fruit to Śiva of auspicious form.

5b-8a. On the fourteenth day in the dark half of the month of Vaiśākha, the intelligent devotee should observe fast. At sunset he should take bath and wear clean white clothes and worship Liṅga with scents and other Upacāras and the leaves of a Bilva tree. After giving invitation to a prominent Brāhmaṇa, he should take food on the next day. O excellent Brāhmaṇa on all Caturdaśīs in the dark halves of the months, the holy rites Śivarātra Vrata should be performed by one who wishes for wealth and progeny.

8b-13. The devotee should observe the holy Vrata of Śrī-Nṛsiṁha[1] on the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha. If he is physically capable, he should observe fast.

1. VV. 8b-13 describe what is popularly known as Nṛsiṁha Jayanti as Viṣṇu manifested himself on Vaiśākha Śu 14 as Narasiṁha in the evening on Svāti Nakṣatra. The NP. calls this simply as *Nṛsiṁha-Vrata*. a confusing designation, as we have Nṛsiṁha Vratas on 8th, 12th and the 13th *Tithis* of different months (vide HD. V. I, pp. 328-329).

Otherwise, he should take a single meal on that day. At sunset he should worship Nṛsiṁha, the slayer of the Daityas, with all the sixteen Upacāras and ablutions with Pañcāmṛta. Then, O Nārada, with the following Mantra, he should crave forgiveness of the Lord—"O Divine Lion with the mane resembling molten gold, with eyes shining like fire and with the touch of claws sharper than thunderbolt, obeisance be to you." After praying thus to the Lord of the Devas, the observer of holy rite should lie down on the bare ground. He should subdue his sense-organs and anger and should eschew all worldly pleasures. O Brāhmaṇa, he who duly performs this excellent holy rite every year, attains all pleasures and (after death) Hari's region.

14-15. O leading sage, the pilgrimage to Oṁkāreśvara is also to be undertaken on this day. The worship of that deity is very difficult to be obtained. The vision of deity is destructive of sins. Of what avail is much talk ? Whatever is accessible, the worship of the deity, meditation, Japa or the vision of the deity is the bestower of perfect knowledge and salvation.

16-18a. On this day, the holy rite of Liṅga-Vrata is to be performed. It is destructive of sins. Liṅga is bathed in Pañcāmṛta and saffron is smeared over it. Fruits are offered as Naivedyas. Incense, lights, clothes and ornaments are offered duly. He who worships Liṅga made of ground flour, attains worldly pleasures and salvation, thanks to the grace of Mahādeva. This Liṅga is the bestower of achievements of all objects.

18b-19a. On the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, the devotee performs austerities in the midst of five fires, during the day time, at night-fall he should make a gift of a golden cow. This is called Rudravrata[1].

19b-20a. On the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha, the devotee should worship Śiva by means of

1. Rudra-Vrata: This is *Pañcāgnisādhana*. Kane notes another variety HD. V. i. 393-94.

the flowers of the season and clime. The man who performs worship thus shall attain all riches.

20b-22. The holy rite of Pavitrāropaṇa is to be observed on the fourteenth day of the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, that has to be performed in accordance with the injunctions laid down in his own branch of the Veda. He should repeat the Mantra a hundred times and dedicate it to the Goddess. By performing the rite of Pavitrāropaṇa,[1] any person, be it a man or a woman, shall attain worldly pleasures and salvation by the grace of the great Goddess (Mahādevī).

23-27. The excellent holy rite of Ananta Caturdaśī[2] is to be performed on the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada. The devotee should take only a single meal on that day. He cooks the Prastha-measure of ground wheat flour smeared with ghee and mixed with sugar and offers it to Ananta as Naivedya after worshipping him at the outset with scents. The old thread worn round the hand is taken off and thrown into the water. A new thread of silken or cotton cord is taken and fourteen knots are tied. The woman devotee wears this on her left hand and the male devotee on his right hand. After cooking the ground flour, he should give it as gift alongwith Dakṣiṇā. He himself shall take in moderate (quantity of) food. The intelligent devotee should perform this excellent Vrata for twice seven years and then perform Udyāpana (Valedictory) rite.

1. VV. 20b-22 mention the outline of *Pavitrāropaṇa Vrata*. For details vide HD V. i. 339-40. The NP does not clarify that *Pavitra* is the sacred thread *Yajñopavīta*.

2. VV. 23-33a describe *Ananta-caturdaśī Vrata*. Ananta is a form of Hari. It is a very popular Vrata and is described with slight variations in the procedure in AP. 192. 7-10, the *Bhaviṣyottara* and *Vratārka*. Hemādri (*Vrata* II pp, 26-36) gives an elaborate description of this Vrata quoting the story of Kauṇḍinya and his wife Sītā Kauṇḍinya losing every thing by cutting the Ananta-thread from his wife's hand and regaining it after propitiation of Ananta. Kane (HD. V. I. pp. 151-53) does not clarify how a thread could represent Kṛṣṇa. Ananta is the name of Serpent Śeṣa. Is it an assimilation of the cult of serpent-worship in Brahmanism ?

28-33a. The devotee draws the mystic diagram Sarvato-Bhadra by means of coloured power and grains. O sage, after making it splendid, the devotee places a copper pot over it. The auspicious golden image of Ananta is then placed over the Kalaśa (vessel) of copper and covered with a yellow silken cloth. He shall then worship the image in accordance with the injunctions. He should severally worship Gaṇeśa, Mothers, planets and the ten guardians of the worlds, quarters. He then performs Homa with Haviṣya (cooked rice soaked in ghee) alongwith the Pūrṇāhuti. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, to his preceptor the devotee gives a bed with all adjuncts, a cow and the image of Ananta. With great devotion he should feed fourteen other Brāhmaṇas, with sweet cooked rice, and propitiate them with Dakṣiṇās. He who thus respectfully performs the Ananta Vrata, directly enjoys worldly pleasures and attains salvation by the grace of Ananta.

33b-39a. The holy rite of Kadalī vrata[1] is also to be observed on this day. Listen to its rules of procedure from me. The devotee may be a man or a woman. He should take his bath and worship the plantain tree in the garden by means of scents, fragrant flowers, germinating grains as well as curds, Dūrvā grass, raw rice-grains, lights, clothes and diverse kinds of cooked food. After the worship, the observer of the holy rite should pray with this Mantra : "O plantain tree, who are worshipped by the Apsaras, Amara (divine) virgins and the serpent virgins, O goddess, obeisance be to you. Grant me freedom from ailment in the body and also loveliness." After the prayer the devotee should feed four virgins or Suvāsinīs (married women) ; they should be provided with silken cloth, saffron powder, collyrium and red lac juice. After bowing to them and concluding the observance, he or she should go back to the house. O Brāhmaṇa, if this Vrata is performed thus the devotee obtains excellent conjugal bliss in this world. After death, he shall go to the heavenly world in an aerial chariot.

1. VV 336-39a describe the *Kadalī Vrata*—wherein the plantain tree is the beauty-giving deity. Hemādri, on the authority of *Bhaviṣyottara* details it (*Vrata* II. 132-33). This is another instance of assimilation of the cult of tree worship in Brahmanism.

39b-43a. On the fourteenth day in the dark half of the month of Āśvina, the Śrāddha rites of the following categories of persons are performed viz. those who are killed by means of poison or weapons; those who are drowned in water, those who are burnt by fire, those who are bitten by serpents or mauled by beasts of prey, those who are killed by thunderbolt and those who murder Brāhmaṇas. They are performed in accordance with the rules laid down in the case of Ekoddiṣṭa Śrāddhas. Brāhmaṇas are fed with sweet cooked rice. The Tarpaṇa rite is performed, mouthfuls of fodder are given to cows and oblations are given to dogs and crows. After performing these rites and the Ācamana rite, the devotee should take his food along with his kinsmen. O Brāhmaṇa, he who performs Śrāddha in this manner alongwith the requisite Dakṣiṇās shall uplift the Pitṛs and go to the eternal world of the Devas.

43b-45. On the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the devotee should perfectly worship the image in gold of Dharmarāja[1] with scents etc. After feeding a Brāhmaṇa, the image is given to him. O Nārada, Dharmarāja protects everyone in the world. He who thus performs the excellent rite of gifting away the image of Dharmarāja enjoys all excellent pleasures here and at the behest of Dharmarāja goes to the heaven.

46-47. On the fourteenth day in the dark half of the month of Kārttika, the devotee takes oil bath at the rise of the moon. After the bath he should worship Dharma. The devotee shall attain fearlessness from hell. For the propitiation of Yama, he should light oil lamps at night fall. With great concentration the devotee should place the lamps at the cross-roads or outside the house.

48-52. In the year called Hemalambi, on the fourteenth day in the bright half of the glorious month of Kārttika, against the dawn, Lord Viśveśvara took his bath in the holy waters at the Maṇikarṇikā Tīrtha alongwith the Devas. O leading sage, with Bhasma he applied the Tripundra (three parallel marks on the forehead). He worshipped his own self and performed

1. This is not recorded by Kane in HD. V. i.

the Pāśupata rite. Hence on that day, the devotee should perform the great worship of the Liṅga with scents and other things. He should offer worship with the flowers of Droṇa Bilva leaves, Arka flowers Ketakī flowers, fruits and different kinds of Naivedyas. If the Vrata is thus performed and only a single meal is taken on that day, it satisfies Viśveśa. O Nārada, he attains all cherished desires, both here and hereafter.

53-57. On this very day the holy rite of Brahmakūrca Vrata is to be observed by one who wishes for prosperity. Observing fast and controlling the sense-organs, the observer of the vow should drink Pañcagavya at night. The Pañcagavya is made thus :

The urine of a tawny-coloured cow; the dung of a black cow; the milk of a white cow; the curds of a red cow and the ghee of a cow of variegated colours.—all these are taken and mixed together. The devotee then takes his bath in the morning with the water sanctified by Kuśa grass and performs the Tarpaṇa rite to the Devas. After propitiating the Brāhmaṇas, he should himself take his food silently. This is the Brahmakūrca Vrata[1] that destroys all sins. The sin committed during the infancy, youth and old age, is dispelled instantaneously by means of the Brahma-Kūrca vrata and the fast on that day.

58-60a. The holy rite of Pāṣāṇa-Vrata is also to be observed on this day. Listen to it, O Nārada. The devotee observes fast during the day. He cooks ground flour in ghee, shaping it in the form of a brick. During the night, he worships Gaurī with scents and other things and offers the flour-brick cooked in ghee as Naivedya. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, after performing this holy rite in the manner mentioned above, the man attains glory, happiness, conjugal bliss and beauty of form.

60b-63. On the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa the devotee takes a single meal or abstains from food and performs the holy rite mentioned before. He should make a gold replica of a bull, worship it and give it to a Brāhmaṇa. On the next day, he should get up early in the morning,

1. *Brahma-Kūrca* is treated here as a *Vrata* though it is really a *Prāyaścitta.*

take his bath and worship Maheśvara accompanied by Umā, with lotus flowers, scents, fragrant garlands and unguents. He should then feed the Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice and propitiate them with Dakṣiṇā etc. O Brāhmaṇa, this is called Śiva Vrata. It is the bestower of worldly pleasures and liberation to the performers, to the instructors, to those who assist, and to those who approve.

64-66a. On the fourteenth day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa, the holy rite of Virūpākṣavrata is to be observed. The devotee should think thus "I shall attain the presence of Kapardīśvara." Having thought thus, O Brāhmaṇa, he should worship Virūpākṣa Śiva with scents, fragrant garlands, incense, lights, richly prepared cooked rice and obeisances. By giving what is contained therein, the devotee rejoices in the heaven like Deva.

66b-68. On the fourteenth day in the dark half of Māgha is prescribed the holy rite of Yamatapana.[1] Before the sunrise the devotee must take his bath and perform the rite of Tarpaṇa unto Yama with the fourteen names mentioned before (chap. 119 verses 59-90) for the purpose of liberation from all sins. The Tarpaṇa rite is to be performed by means of gingelly seeds, Darbha grass and water. Kṛśara and cooked rice constitute the meal of the Brāhmaṇas. He himself should eat the same with restricted speech in silence.

69-73a. O Brāhmaṇa, the holy rite of Śivarātrī[2] is to be observed on the fourteenth day in the dark half of the last month (i.e Phālguna). The devotee observes fast, even abjuring water, during the day, and worships the deity at night in the self-born Liṅga etc. or the Liṅga made of clay with deep concentration of mind. He worships the Lord with scents and

1. Kane has recorded a number of *Śiva Vratas* (HD. V. i. pp. 426-427), but this Vrata is different from them.

2. This is the famous *Mahāśivarātri-Vrata* popular all over India. The NP follows *Pūrṇimānta* reckoning and thus locates it in Phālguna. This *Vrata* is highly extolled in *Garuḍa* P. I-124, SK. P. I-1. 33, Pd. P. VI. 240 and AP. 193. The whole *Vrata* is discussed in details by Kane HD. V. 1-225-236. As compared with other Purāṇas and digests, the NP. gives a bare outline of the *Vrata*.

other Upacāras, the leaves of the Bilva, etc., water, incense, lights, recitation of hymns, Japa etc. as well as Naivedyas duly offered. On the next day too the deity is again worshipped with the Upacāras. After feeding Brāhmaṇas with sweet cooked rice, he should give them the requisite Dakṣiṇās and bid farewell to them. By performing the Vrata thus, the man obtains immortal pleasures, thanks to the grace of Mahādeva. He is well-honoured and respected by Devas.

73b-74. On the fourteenth day, in the bright half of the last month, the devotee worships Durgā with great devotion, offering scents and other Upacāras. Thereafter, he feeds the Brāhmaṇas. O Brāhmaṇa, he should take only a single meal on that day. By performing the Vrata of Durgā thus, he derives cherished desires, both here and hereafter, O Nārada.

75-76. The devotee shall observe fast on the fourteenth day in the dark half of the month of Caitra. By drinking water from a rice-field on the day one derives the benefit of a horse-sacrifice.

The general procedure regarding Udyāpana[1] (valedictory rite of conclusion) for all these holy rites is now narrated.

77-79. Fourteen pots with areca nuts, unbroken raw rice-grains and sweet-meats, may be made of copper or clay. They must be fresh and uncracked. The Dakṣiṇās and silken garments should also be placed there. Besides these the following too are to be provided as necessary viz. fourteen bamboo poles, fourteen sacred seats, fourteen vessels and fourteen sacred texts. As for the other things, they should be performed in the manner mentioned before. The devotee should not be stingy in the matter of expenses.

1. VV. 77-79 give the general procedure of the *Udyāpana* (concluding ceremony) of these *Caturdaśī Vratas.*

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYFOUR

Exposition of Vratas to be observed on the Full Moon and the New Moon days

Sanātana said :

1. Henceforth, O Nārada, I shall recount to you the holy rite to be observed on the Full Moon day. Listen. On observing these rites the performer of Vratas whether he be a man or a woman, attains series of happiness.

2. O leading Brāhmaṇa, the Full Moon day in the month of Caitra is the day of the inauguration of the Manvantara. On this day, the observer of the Vrata should give a pot of water with cooked rice, for the propitiation of Soma (the Moon).

3. On the full moon day in the month of Vaiśākha, the gift of all articles is the bestower of all things. Certainly, one attains those things which one bestows on a Brāhmaṇa.

4-5a. The holy rite of Dharmarāja Vrata is also to be performed on this day. Listen to it. One should give cooked rice and pot of water to an excellent Brāhmaṇa on the Full Moon day in the month of Vaiśākha. It is conducive to the propitiation of Dharmarāja and it yields the same benefit as the gift of a cow.

5b-7. On this very same day, one should give the hide of a deer alongwith its horn and the hoofs to a Brāhmaṇa alongwith gingelly seeds and gold. They should be covered with clothes. He who gives, in accordance with the prescribed injunctions, the hide of a deer after honouring the scholar who knows the Śāstras, is actually the donor of the whole of the earth consisting of the seven continents, and rejoices in the world of Viṣṇu as long as the moon, sun and stars shine in the firmament.

8. He who gives to prominent Brāhmaṇas pots full of water alongwith gold never meets with sorrow.

9. On the Full Moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha the holy rite of vaṭasāvitrikā[1] is to be observed. The woman devotee

1. VV. 9-12 briefly describe the famous *Vaṭa-Sāvitrī-Vrata*, the main features of which are sprinkling water at the foot of a banyan tree,

observes fast and pours nectar like water at the root of the Vaṭa (Banyan tree).

10. She should encircle with threads the holy tree and circumambulate it one hundred and eight times. Thereafter, she should pray to the divine and highly chaste lady Sāvitrī :

11. "O Mother Sāvitrī, who considered your husband a deity, you are the mother of the Universe. You are worthy of being worshipped by the whole universe. O gentle lady present in this Vaṭa tree, obeisance to you. Grant me nonseparation from my husband.

12. After praying thus she goes home. On the next day, she shall feed Suvāsinīs (married women whose husbands are alive) and take food herself. She shall be blessed with conjugal bliss.

13-15. The holy rite of Go-padma[1] is prescribed for performance on the full moon day in the month of Āṣāḍha. After taking his bath the devotee meditates on Hari thus :

"He has four arms and a huge body. He has the lustre of gold. He appears beautiful with the conch, discus, iron

circumambulating the tree one hundred and eight times and weaving a thread round it all the while, prayer of Sāvitrī (associated with the tree) for sparing oneself from widowhood and feeding *Suvāsinīs* the next day after which the lady observer of the Vrata breaks the fast.

This Vrata is observed on Jyeṣṭha Kṛ. 30 also (infra verse 85). The story of Sāvitrī who brought back her husband from the god of death is extremely popular (vide *Mbh.-Vana* Chs. 293-299, Mt. P. Chs. 208-214 the *SK. P.-Prabhāsa* Ch. 166). The *Vrata* consists of fast for three nights which the NP. fails to prescribe. Its mention in the AP. 194. 5-8 shows that the *Vrata* was in vogue before the 10th Cent. A.D. It is said that the *Vrata* is called *Vaṭa-Sāvitrī* as it was under the shade of a *Vaṭa* tree that Satyavān (Sāvitrī's husband) went and took hold of its branch before he collapsed.

The banyan tree with its spreading branches symbolises the spread of one's race. Perhaps pre-Aryans worshipped this tree for increase and spread of their race and the story of Sāvitrī came to be associated with it while it was being Brahminised.

1. VV. 13-17 describe the *Go-Padma Vrata*. The NP. fails to justify the title *Go-Padma* of this Viṣṇu Vrata. The girl or woman has to draw 33 figures of cows foot-print everyday during the *Vrata*. Hence its title *Gopadma*. For details vide VRJ., pp. 301-302.

club, lotus, goddess Lakṣmī and Garuḍa. He is served by sages, Devas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Kinnaras."

(After meditation) he should worship the Lord by means of the Puruṣa Sūkta, and with scents and other Upacāras.

16 He should propitiate the preceptor with clothes, ornaments and other things as well as with affectionate mind. He should feed Brāhmaṇas and others with sweet cooked rice according to his capacity.

17. O Brāhmaṇa, by performing this Vrata, the devotee undoubtedly, derives his cherished desires both here and hereafter, thanks to the grace of the Lord of (Kamalā) Lakṣmī.

18-21. The holy rite of Kokilā Vrata is to be observed on this very same day. The rules of procedure are now described. The observance is from this full moon to the next full moon in the month of Śrāvaṇa. The woman should take her bath in the water outside the house (i.e. in a river or a tank). She should meditate on goddess Pārvatī as follows : "Gaurī has the form of a cuckoo with golden wings, jewelled eyes, louts-like face, having the lustre of coral and the complextion of musk. She is born in the heavenly Nandana Park, seated on mango and Campaka trees cooking out exquisite song." Her figure is painted in colours on cloth. The devotee worships her every day with scents and other things.

22. O Brāhmaṇa, when the Vrata is concluded, she devoutly should give a Brāhmaṇa the image of the goddess in gold or ground flour of gingelly seeds, alongwith a gold piece as Dakṣiṇā. The following Mantra is uttered.

23. "O Goddess Kokilā, born in the park of Citraratha, O beloved wife of Hara, you have been worshipped and given to a Brāhmaṇa. Be the cause of happiness to me."

24. He should then feed the Brāhmaṇa and thirty Sanyāsinīs if possible, otherwise one, and give clothes etc. and Dakṣiṇā in accordance with her capacity. After bowing to them she should bid farewell to them.

25. O Nārada, the woman who performs this excellent Kokilāvrata attains happiness and conjugal bliss in the course of seven births.

26-28. On the full moon day in the month of Śrāvaṇa is

the holy rite of Vedopākarma[1] (i.e. inauguration of Vedic studies). On this day the rite of Tarpaṇa unto the Devas, sages and the Pitṛs is to be performed through the Mantras of the Yajurveda. (The followers of the Yajurveda perform this rite of Upākarma on the day). The followers of Ṛgveda (i.e. Bahvṛcas) perform this on the Caturdaśī day and the followers of the Sāmaveda perform this in the month of Bhādrapada (on the Caturthī day). The worship of the sages is performed in the manner laid down in one's own Śākhā (branch of the Vedas). The Rakṣā (holy string) should be tied round the hand in accordance with the injunctions.

29. White Mustard seeds, unbroken raw rice-grains and black mustard are washed in water kept in a bell-metal vessel and then tied in a red silk cloth with a saffron-smeared thread. The devotee then worships Devas and prays to Viṣṇu and others. Delighted in mind, the devotee should lay down to a Brāhmaṇa and get the thread tied round his wrist by him.

30-31. Thereafter, he gives Dakṣiṇā to Brāhmaṇas and begins the study of the Vedas. After ritualistically dismissing the seven sages, he should wear a new sacred thread made by himself and coloured with saffron, etc. According to his capacity he should feed the prominent Brāhmaṇas and he himself should take only a single meal on that day.

32. O Brāhmaṇa, if this Vrata is performed, it makes atonement for all omissions and commissions in the Vedic study. If the Vedic rites are forgotten or are performed in contravention of the injunctions, this holy rite rectifies it.

33-34. The holy rite of Umāmaheśvara Vrata is to be performed on the full moon day in the month of Bhādrapada.

1. *Vedopākarma* is simply *upākarma* and means opening, beginning. Nārāyaṇa on *Āśvalāyana Gr. S.* III. 5.1 states that *upākarma* or *upākaraṇa* is the ceremony marking the (re-) beginning of Vedic Studies. Various dates and varieties of details of the *upākarma* are given by Kane in HD. II. ii. pp. 807-818. Due to its performance on *Śravaṇa Nakṣatra* in the month of Śrāvaṇa, it came to be known as *Śrāvaṇo* in Marathi. The tradition of Vedic studies is lost and what the elderly people do now is to change their *Yajñopavīta* on this day with or without the performance of the rite of *Upākarma*. The ritual given by the NP is different from the traditional one prescribed in the *gṛhya sūtras*.

The devotee takes a single meal on the previous day i.e. Caturdaśī day, assiduously worships Śiva. With palms joined in reverence he should pray thus : "O Lord, I shall perform holy Vrata (vow) tomorrow." After intimating thus to the Lord, the devotee takes up the excellent Vrata.

35. At night, he sleeps near the deity and gets up in the last watch (Yāma) of the night. After carrying out the routine such as voiding of excrement and washing, etc. the devotee applies Bhasma and wears Rudrākṣa.

36. He should worship Śaṅkara correctly with different kinds of Upacāras, fragrant flowers, leaves of Bilva, incense lights and diverse kinds of Naivedya.

37. Then the scholarly devotee should observe fast till sunset. After the moonrise, he worships the deity once again and keeps awake at night.

38-41. Carefully and alertly, the devotee should perform this rite for fifteen years. In the last year, in the course of its Utsarga rite (valedictory and concluding rite), he should get two gold images made, that of Umā and that of Maheśa. He should get ready fifteen excellent posts made of gold, silver or clay. In one of the pots should be placed the two images covered with a cloth. He should bathe them in Pañcāmṛta first and then in pure water. Thereafter he shall worship deity with the sixteen Upacāras. Then fifteen Brāhmaṇas are fed with sweet cooked rice and Dakṣiṇās too are given.

42-43a. He should give pots to the preceptor. Each of the pots is accompanied by a Mūrti (image) of the Lord. By performing this holy rite named Umā Maheśvara, the devotee becomes famous in the world and the receptacle of all riches.

43b-44. On this very same day, the holy rite of Śakra-Vrata also is to be observed. Early in the morning, the devotee takes his bath and worships the ruler of the Devas, in accordance with the injunctions, with scents and other Upacāras and different articles of Naivedya in heaps.

45. Then O, Brāhmaṇa, he should duly feed the invited Brāhmaṇas and others who had come as visitors. He shall feed the indigent and the helpless also.

46. O Brāhmaṇa, this Śakravrata must be performed every year by a king or any other rich man who wishes for plenty of food-grains.

47-48. The holy rite named Kojāgara[1] is to be observed on the full moon day in the month of Āśvina. The devotee takes the holy dip in accordance with the injunctions. He observes fast and subdues his sense-organs. A gold image of goddess Lakṣmī is placed in a pot made of copper or clay. It is covered with a cloth and worshipped with different kinds of Upacāras.

49. In the evening when the moon has risen, he should light lamps made of gold, silver or clay after filling them with ghee.

50-51. They should be a hundred thousands, fifty thousand, ten thousand, one thousand or hundred in number. Milk puddings are prepared in a huge quantity with plenty of sugar and ghee. They shall be kept in many vessels in the bright moonlight. When the night has advanced by a full Yāma (three hours), the devotee shall offer milk puddings as Naivedya to Lakṣmī.

52. With great devotion he should then feed the Brāhmaṇas with the milk puddings. All of them then keep awake for the whole of the night with songs and auspicious instrumental music and dances.

53-54. The next day before dawn, the devotee takes his bath and dedicates the gold image to the preceptor. (It is said) that on this night goddess Mahālakṣmī with the gestures of granting boon and fearlessness in her lotus-like hands moves over the Earth saying—ko jāgarti (who is keeping awake) on this Earth ? I shall give wealth to that person who keeps awake and worships me."

55. This Vrata should be performed every year. It propitiates Lakṣmī. It yields prosperity in this world and bliss in the other world after death.

1. VV. 47-55 describe the *Kojāgara Vrata* or Kaumudī Mahotsava mentioned in Sanskrit and Prakrit Literature, Purāṇas and mediaeval digests. The NP. does not mention dice-playing on that night.

56. On the full moon day in the month of Kārttika, Lord Kārttikeya should be visited for the attainment of Brahminhood again (i.e. in the next birth) and for the conquest of all enemies.

57. On this very same day, Tripurotsava (the festival of Tripura) should be performed by celebrating illuminations (of buildings, ghats etc.), O excellent Brāhmaṇa, this festival of light at night-fall is conducive to the happiness of all living beings.

58. Insects, locusts, mosquitoes, trees and the living beings that move about in water or dry land are not reborn after seeing these lights. They attain liberation.

59-61. O Brāhmaṇa, at the time of the moon-rise the six Kṛttikās must be worshipped. So also Kārttikeya, Khaḍgī, Varuṇa and Hutāśana (Fire-God) are to be worshipped with scents and fragrant flowers, incense, lights, extensive Naivedyas, excellent cooked rice, fruits, vegetable and by propitiation of the fire-god and the Brāhmaṇas. Thus after bowing down and worshipping the Devas, light should be offered outside the house.

62-64. Very near the lamps, a beautiful square-shaped pit fourteen Aṅgulas deep should be made and sprinkled with sandal water. After filling it with milk of cows, the devotee should put in it an image of a fish made of gold and exquisite in every limb, and with eyes constituted of pearls. Uttering the Mantra, 'Obeisance to the great Fish' the devotee should worship it with scents and other things and offer it to a Brāhmaṇa.

65. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the charitable gift of the ocean of Milk[1] has been recounted to you by me. Thanks to the power of this charitable gift, the devotee rejoices in the presence of Hari.

66. O Nārada, by performing the rite of Vṛṣotsarga (setting a bull-calf free) during the night, the devotee attains Rudra's region. No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

1. VV. 62-65 describe the *Kṣīra-sāgara dāna* (gift of the milky ocean). The whole procedure is symbolic.

67. For the profuse abundance of all desired benefits, an Āḍhaka-measure of salt should be offered to a quiet Brāhmaṇa alongwith gold, on the full moon day in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa.

68-69. Formerly, this universe was abandoned by Lakṣmī. So Hari, Indra, Soma, Tiṣya and Bṛhaspati—these five made the universe still more dignified and decorated by means of the sports of festivities of blessedness on the full moon day coinciding with the Puṣya constellation.

70. Hence, for the increase of all conjugal bliss and good fortune he (the Vratin) should smear his body with the Kalka (minced pieces after being boiled in a decoction) of white mustard and take his bath when there is the conjunction of Puṣya and the full moon.

71-72a. He should pour over his body, water, in which all medicinal herbs are put. He should wear new silk clothes. After seeing, touching and bowing to all the auspicious articles, he should worship Hari, Śakra, Indu, Puṣya and Ijyā (i.e. Jupiter, Bṛhaspati) with scents and other Upacāras.

72b-73. After performing Homa he should propitiate the Brāhmaṇas by feeding them with milk puddings. O Brāhmaṇa, by performing this Vrata that increases the pleasure of Ramā (Lakṣmī) and destroys Alakṣmī (Misfortune), the devotee rejoices here and hereafter.

74-76a. On the full moon day in the month of Māgha, the following should be offered as charitable gifts :— gingelly seeds, cotton or woollen blanket, jewels, bodice, turban, shoes or cash presents. By giving these charitable gifts according to his affluence, the devotee rejoices in heaven. He who worships Lord Śaṅkara duly, attains the benefit of a Horse-sacrifice and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

76b-78. The holy rite of Holikā-worship[1] is to be observed

1. VV. 76b-81 deal with Holikā-worship. The NP. says that it is the celebration of burning Kāma or the ogress Holikā. There is a little obscenity attended with this celebration, only Bengal is free from it, as they celebrate the *Dolā-yātrā* of Kṛṣṇa on this day, and engage a priest to perform worship before the bone-fire. This religious element persisted since the period of the NP. (or even before) in Bengal.

on the full moon day in the month of Phālguna. The devotee collects all types of wood and cow-dung cakes. After duly kindling fire therein, by means of extensive Mantras destructive of Rākṣasas, the devotee repeats this Mantra—"O Holi, you have been made by people of childish traits who are afraid of blood-sucking Ogresses. Hence I shall worship you. Be the bestower of prosperity on the living beings."

79. By repeating this Mantra, more and more wood is thrown in and the fire is made brighter. The devotees go round it and carry on the festivities with songs and instrumental music.

80-81. (There are two opinions about the burning of Holikā).* (one opinion) : This ogress Holikā was a terror to Prahlāda. Hence, people burn her with wood to the accompaniment of songs and instrumental music. This is the burning of the Saṁvatsara (year). In the opinion of others, it is the burning of Kāma. Thus O leading Brāhmaṇa, you shall know that there are many traditions in the world.

82. The two days of festival at the end of a fortnight are the full moon and the new moon. Hence the Amāvrata[1] (the holy rite on New Moon days) is described. O Brāhmaṇa, listen to their separate nature. This Vrata is a great favourite of the manes.

83-84. On the new moon days of the months of Caitra and Vaiśākha the worship of Pitṛs is recommended. The Śrāddha in accordance with the injunction governing festival days and in accordance with one's affluence is to be performed. The feeding of Brāhmaṇas and charitable gifts of cows etc. in particular, are highly meritorious on the new moon days, in all the months.

85. The Vrata of Sāvitrī is to be observed on the new moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha. O Nārada, its rules of

*It is a very ancient festival and was called Holikā in east India (Śabara on *Pūrvamīmāṁsā* I. 3. 15-23). Hemādri calls this Hutāśani as we do now.

1. In VV. 82-96 the NP. groups together *Amā-Vratas* i.e. Vratas to be observed on the new-moon days. As this day is specially sacred to the manes (*Pitṛs*) different *śrāddhas* are prescribed on these days.

procedure are the same as for the festival of the full moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha.

86. O Brāhmaṇa, in the months of Āṣāḍha, Śrāvaṇa and Bhādrapada (when Pūrṇimānta or) ending with the full moon day, the following rites are to be performed, and they are endless in their benefits. The rites are Śrāddha of manes (ancestors), charitable gift, Homa and the worship of the Devas.

87-88a. O Brāhmaṇa, Kuśas grow in the fields of gingelly seeds. In the afternoon of the new moon day in the month of Bhādrapada, the devotee repeats the Mantra of Viriñci (god Brahmā) and cuts those Kuśa grasses saying 'Huṁ phaṭ'. These grasses can be used always in all holy rites. But the other Kuśa grasses can be used only once.

88b-89a. On the new moon day in the month of Āśvina, Śrāddha and Tarpaṇa of the Pitṛs are particularly recommended. They must be performed in the waters of Gaṅgā. In the holy centre of Gayā, it yields liberation.

89b-91a. On the new moon day in the month of Kārttika, lights should be offered as gifts in temples of gods, river banks, parks, tanks, cowpens, market places, monasteries and other places. Worship of Lakṣmī is performed on this day. Gold and silver whether made into ornaments or not (are dealt in on this day). Playing at dice throughout the year, predicts gain or loss exactly as one wins or loses.

91b-92a. On this day, worship of cows is laid down in the following manner viz. : the horns and other limbs are painted; barley and other grains are given; cows are bowed to and circumambulated.

92b-93a. In the month of Mārgaśīrṣa also, there is Pitṛ Pūjā (worship of the manes) by means of Śrāddhas and feeding of Brāhmaṇas, observances of the restraints of celibacy etc. as well as Japa, Homa, Arcanā and other rites.

93b-96. O leading Brāhmaṇa, in the months of Pauṣa and Māgha, the Śrāddhas performed to the Pitṛs are more efficacious. If on the New Moon Day in the month of Phālguna, the day is combined with Karṇapāta (?) and the Sun (i.e. prob. Vyatīpāta, Śravaṇā Nakṣatra and the Sun are found on

that day), performance of mere Śrāddha or feeding of Brāhmaṇas is more efficacious (in giving good fruit) than even at Gayā (their performance at Gayā) ; charitable gifts etc. are the bestowers of all benefit if made on the new moon day. If it falls on a Monday the benefit is still more. O sage, thus in brief, I have recounted to you the duties on the different Tithis. In all these instances there are some special cases. Those are mentioned in other Purāṇas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYFIVE

The greatness of the Purāṇa[1]

Sūta said :

1. Having recounted thus (the matter in the foregone four Pādas of this Purāṇa) on being enquired (about it) by the sage Nārada, it is reported that the (four) Kumāras (viz. Sanat, Sanaka, Sanandana and Sanātana) who were the most excellent ones among the knowers of the sacred lore (śāstras) were worshipped by Nārada. After performing their

1. This is the concluding chapter of the original *Nārada Purāṇa* which consisted of four *pādas* (*catuṣpādasamāyuktam* V. 26). Here the interlocutors disperse as follows.

(1) The Kumāras, the reciters of the NP. are worshipped by Nārada. They went to god Śiva and learnt the *Śaiva Āgama*. After this they visited god Brahmā and lastly god Viṣṇu at the *Badari* forest (VV. 1-5).

(2) Bidding good-bye to Śaunaka and other Brāhmaṇas, Sūta went to his preceptor Vyāsa (VV. 48-49).

(3) Śaunaka and other Brāhmaṇas remained there in the Naimiṣa forest and resumed their *Satra* (sacrificial session) V. 49.

(4) VV. in this chapter 26-47 is the eulogy of the NP. and of the benefit derived form hearing NP. This is called *phalaśruti* which marks the end of a particular work.

These verses show that the original NP. was completed here at the end of this chapter.

prescribed daily routine duties, they went to the world of the Lord of Umā (i.e. god Śiva).

2. There (in the region of god Śiva) they bowed down to Ugra (i.e. Śiva), Īśa, whose feet have been worshipped by the leading sages like Śrīvāmadeva and others who resembled (in refulgence) the fire and the sun—Śiva who is worthy of being adored by the leaders of the Devas and Asuras. At his behest, they sat on the bare ground.

3. There, they heard the Śaiva Āgama which is the essence of all sacred lores, and which is conducive to the liberation of Paśu (individual soul) from Pāśa (bondage of Saṁsāra). After bowing to Purāri (Śiva) those sages who were the very concrete embodiments of Pure knowledge, went to the presence of their father (god Brahmā).

4. They bowed down to his lotus feet. They were duly honoured and welcomed by their father. Receiving his blessings they became holy and sacred. From that time onwards, they who are the embodiments of holy places, are continuously moving about in the holy centres in all the three worlds.

5. Thereafter, they went to the holy forest of Badarī, where they meditated for a long time on the immutable lotus-like feet of Lord Viṣṇu which are being resorted to by groups of leading Devas and on which the ascetics, devoid of passion, contemplate.

6. After acquiring the spiritual knowledge along with sound wisdom and discrimination so longed for by him from those Kumāras (viz. Sanaka, Sanandana and others), Nārada was highly pleased in his mind.

7. From the banks of that celestial river, he returned to his father's presence, where he was warmly welcomed by his father (god Brahmā). After bowing to him he took his seat there.

8. He described factually the spiritual wisdom along with sound knowledge that he had heard from the Kumāras. On hearing that, he (i.e. Brahmā) too rejoiced.

9. Then the excellent sage (Nārada) bowed down (to Brahmā) with his head and received his blessings. He came over to Kailāsa which is frequented by sages and Siddhas.

10-11. The place is continuously filled with different

kinds ofwonderful things. It is full of trees blossoming in all the seasons—trees such as Mandāras, Pārijātas, Campakas, Aśokas, Vañjulas and many others. They are occupied by flocks of different kinds of birds. When their branches are shaken by the wind, they appear as though they are inviting the way-farers.

12. The place is full of different herds of deer. It is thronged by the Siddhas and Kinnaras. It appears splendid, thanks to the lakes with crystal-clear water where golden lotuses bloom with splendour.

13-15a. It was reverberated with the sounds of various aquatic birds such as Sārasas, Cakravākas and swans. It was resounded with the tumultuous sound of the fall of heavenly river, by the sporting bevies of celestial damsels playing in the waters of the river Alakanandā which had turned tawny-coloured through the saffron powders from their breasts. It was teeming with joyous elephants who bathed their mates and cubs with the waters taken up by their trunks.

15b-16a. On a peak that resembled a white cloud, of that mountain, he saw a spreading banyan tree which extended over a hundred Yojanas and which appeared like a black cloud.

16b-18a. Beneath it, he saw Lord Śiva seated in the middle of a group of Yogins. The lord had matted hair and unusual number (i.e. three) of eyes. He was clad in the hide of a tiger. He had smeared ashes all over his body. He was adorned with serpents as ornaments. He was perpetually refulgent with his necklace of Rudrākṣa-beads and he had a crescent of the moon on his head.

18b-19a. On seeing (the moon-crested) Lord, O Brāhmaṇa, Nārada bent down and lowered his neck with great devotion. He bowed his head down at the feet of the Lord of the Universe.

19b-20. With a delighted mind, he eulogised the bull-bannered Lord, verbally. At the behest of Sthāṇu (Śiva), he sat down. He was greeted and honoured by the Yogins. Then the preceptor of the worlds (i.e. Lord Śiva) enquired about the health and welfare of Nārada.

21-22a. He replied—"Thanks to your Honour's grace, I am blest with everything." O Brāhmaṇas, even as all the leading Yogins were listening, (Nārada) asked Śiva about special knowledge of Śambhu, that is conducive to the liberation of the Paśu from the Pāśa.

22b-23a. Śiva was highly delighted in his mind with his respectful devotion. The Lord favourably disposed towards those who bow down to him, recounted the Yoga philosophy with all its eight subsections. (or accessories)

23b-24a. After acquiring the knowledge pertaining to Śambhu, from Śaṅkara, the benefactor of all the worlds, Nārada became delighted in his mind. After bowing to him, he went near Nārāyaṇa.

24b-25a. Nārada who was accustomed to coming to and fro frequently, propitiated Nārāyaṇa, who is served by the Yogins and the Siddhas.

25b-26. Thus, O Brāhmaṇas, the great narrative of Nārada Puraṇa has been recounted to you. It is on a par with the Vedas. It is a model for all sacred lores. It comprises four Pādas (quarters, sections). It increases the perfect knowledge of listeners.

27-29. O Brāhmaṇas, he who recites and glorifies devoutly this narrative pertaining to Nārada, in a Śiva temple, in the assembly of prominent Brāhmaṇas, in the temple of Keśava, in Mathurā, in Prayāga, in the presence of Puruṣottama (or at Jagannātha Puri), at Setu (i.e. the bridge built by Rāma on his way to Laṅkā), in Kāñcī, at Dvārakā, at Gaṅgādvāra, Kuśasthala, on the banks of the lotus tanks (or at Puṣkara), on the banks of rivers—in fact, anywhere (he pleases) shall obtain the great benefit of performance of all Yajñas and the visit of all holy centres.

30-31. He shall obtain the benefit of all charitable gifts and of performing all austerities. Both the listener and the propounder (narrator) should be devoted to Nārāyaṇa or to Śiva; He should either observe fast or take in only Haviṣya food (cooked rice soaked in ghee). He should subdue his sense-organs. Listening thus to this Purāṇa he shall attain Siddhi (Mokṣa).

32. It is in this narrative that all merits and Siddhis

originate. It is declared as destructive of all sins of those who read and listen to it.

33. It removes the defects due to Kali's harrassment; it is conducive to the increase of all riches of men. This is liked by everyone. It illuminates all knowledge.

34-37a. It sheds light on the modes of austerities, holy rites and their benefits of the followers of Śiva, Viṣṇu, Śakti, the Sun god and Gaṇapati. It explains the duties of those who adhere to the system of disciplined life in accordance with the classification of various castes and stages of life. It throws light on the Mantras, Yantras and the ancillary subjects of the Vedas with their divisions. It is a brief digest of the Āgamas, the Vedas and the Sāṁkhya tenets. He who reads this devoutly or listens to it with great concentration, shall derive all cherished desires difficult of access, even to the Devas and others.

37b-39a. After listening to this Nārada Purāṇa which is on a par with the Vedas, the devotee should worship the expounder with devotion, wealth, jewels, silk cloths, etc. and with the gifts of plots of land, cows, jewels etc. With the gifts of elephants, horses and chariots, he should ever please the preceptor.

39b-40a. O Brāhmaṇa, who else can be a preceptor other than the person who comments on the Purāṇas wherein all dharmas (religious duties) have been collected together and which bestows all the fourfold aims of human life. (viz. Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa).

40b-41a. The devotee should always do what is pleasing to the preceptor who instructs him in religious duties. He should render him service physically, mentally and verbally as well as through cash presents.

41b-42. After listening to the Purāṇa duly and after performing Homa and worship of the Devas, the devotee should feed a hundred Brāhmaṇas, with sweet cooked rice and milk puddings. He should give them monetary gifts in accordance with his capacity. Mādhava shall be pleased with his devotion.

43-46. Just as Gaṅgā is the most excellent among the rivers, Puṣkara is the most excellent among the lakes, (and just as in their respective categories the following are the best

viz.) the city of Kāśi, the mountain Meru, Lord Hari, Nārāyaṇa, the Kṛta age, the Sāma Veda, the cow, the Brāhmaṇa, the cooked rice, water, the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, the lion, the (Cosmic Man) Puruṣa, the Aśvattha (holy fig tree), Prahlāda, the face, the horse Uccaiśśravas, the season Vasanta (spring), Japa, the serpent Seṣa, Aryaman, the bow, the fire, Viṣṇu, Indra, the sage Kapila, the Lord of speech (Bṛhaspati) Kavi (poet, Śukra), Arjuna, Hanumān, Darbha grass, the mind, the gandharva Citraratha, the Lotus, the Apsaras Ūrvaśī and gold—all these are the most excellent ones in their own groups.

47. Similarly, the Nārada Purāṇa is the most excellent among all the Purāṇas. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, peace be to you; welfare be to all of you.

48. I shall now go to my preceptor Vyāsa, of unmeasured splendour. After saying this, Sūta was worshipped by Śaunaka and other noble souls.

49. Permitted by all of them, he went his way to see his preceptor Vyāsa.

All those excellent Brāhmaṇas, Śaunaka and others carried out the advice they had heard with great concentration and perfection in details. They remained there itself, performing their Satra (sacrifice).

50. He who takes (resorts) to meditating in the form of injunctions regarding the performance of Japa and worship of Hari, the destroyer of the poison of the sins of Kali, purges completely his mind of that poison (or Kali) and accomplishes Yoga and ultimately attains the ever-cherished region of Hari.

UTTARA BHĀGA[1]

CHAPTER ONE

The greatness of Ekādaśi day

Obeisance to Śri Gaṇeśa

Obeisance to Śri Kṛṣṇa

1. May the four arms of Hari protect you all—the arms dark like clouds in complexion, hardened by the friction (strokes) of the strings of the Śārṅga bow and which are like columns supporting the big pavilion (-like structure) of the three worlds.

2. May the lotus-like pair of Hari's feet be the bestower of desires on us—the pair of feet refulgent with the brilliance of the polished crest jewels of Devas and Asuras (as they bow to him).

Māndhātā[2] *said* :

3. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, It behoves your honour to tell me what that fire is that burns both dry and damp fuel of terrible sins.

1. Although the last redactor of the NP. tries to show that this Part (*Uttara Khaṇḍa*) also called *Uttara Bhāga* in colophons of chapters) is an integral part of the NP (*vide Supra* I. 97. 10-18), the whole setting of this part is different, showing that it must have been an independent work to glorify *Ekādaśī Vrata* and to illustrate it with the Rukmāṅgada-Mohinī episode. But this unification of the two parts took place before the 10th cent. A.D. (Kane HD. V. ii. pp. 892-93), An early digest writer like Devaṇa Bhaṭṭa (1200-1225 A.D.) quotes many verses from the *Uttara-Khaṇḍa* of the extant NP. in his *Smṛti-Chandrikā*. Earlier still, Aparārka (1100-1130 A.D.) quotes from it two verses on Ekādaśī (HD. V. ii. 892). Hence, though apocryphal, the *Uttara-Khaṇḍa* has been regarded as the integral part of the NP. for the last 1000 years. By any standard, it is a good story and the writer of this part is a gifted story-teller.

2. *Māndhātā*—An emperor of the solar race, son of king Yuvanāśva, He was born from his father's belly. When the problem of feeding him

4. O sage, born of the four-faced deity (Brahmā), there is nothing that is unknown to you in the three worlds. O prominent Brāhmaṇa, the three - fold things (of the past, present and future time) are precisely known to you.

5. The sin committed unknowingly is called Śuṣka (dry) and the sin committed knowingly is cited as Ārdra (wet). Please tell us the three events: that which are yet to be (future), that which has passed by (past), and that which is current (present).

6a. What is that fire whereby the sin may be reduced to ashes? This is esteemed by me (i.e. what I want to know).

Vasiṣṭha said :

6b-9. O mighty king, may it be heard what that fire is whereby it is possible to reduce to ashes completely the dry as well as the wet kinds of sin. A person who, on the day of Lord Viṣṇu (i.e. Ekādaśī day) with due control of sense-organs observes fast, worships the killer of demon Madhu (i.e. God Viṣṇu), takes bath in water containing Emblic Myrobalan and keeps awake during that (Ekādaśī) night, completely absolves himself of all sins like a gambler losing all his wealth.

10. O king of kings, the fuel of sins even though accumulated (lit. generated) in the course of hundred births, is reduced to ashes through the fire called Ekādaśī.

11. O king, there is nothing that sanctifies men so much as the day of Padmanābha (i.e. Ekādaśī) that destroys sins.

12. O ruler of men, sins remain in this body, only so long as the creature (i.e. man) does not observe fast on the auspicious day of Padmanābha.

arose, god Indra came forward and said, "He will suck me" (*māṁdhātā*). The Pd. P. tells us that when there was a drought for the continuous three years, the sages advised him to observe Ekādaśi Padma-nābhā (i.e. Padmā). He observed Ekādaśi Vrata and made all his subjects to follow it. Rains showered, people became happy and the king prospered (Pd. P. VI—*Uttara Khaṇḍa*, Ch. 58. 33-38.

A proper setting for glorifying the *Ekādaśī Vrata* with Māndhātā as an interlocutor. But it is after two benedictory verses that Māndhātā is *abruptly* introduced. In fact no background is provided to this dialogue between Māndhātā and Vasiṣṭha, his family priest.

13. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices do not deserve even a sixteenth part of the fast observed on the Ekādaśī day.

14. O Lord, all the sins that have been committed by the eleven sense organs shall be dissolved, thanks to the fast on the Ekādaśī (eleventh) day.

15. O king, there is nothing equal to Ekādaśī that is destructive of sins. Even if it is observed under a pretext it exempts one from seeing the son of the Sun-god (i.e. Yama, the god of death and Hell).

16. It bestows heavently pleasure and salvation; it yields kingdom and sons; it grants good wives and freedom from ailments to the body.

17-18. O king, neither Gaṅgā, nor Kāśī, nor Gayā, nor Puṣkara, nor Kurukṣetra nor the river Revā, or the Devikā,[1] and neither the Yamunā nor the Candrabhāgā are more meritorious than the day of Hari. O leading king, Hari's abode is attained without any strain.

19. By observing fast during the day on the day of Hari and by keeping awake during the night, a man is liberated from sins and he goes direct to the region of Viṣṇu.

20. O leading king, it uplifts ten generations on the mother-side, ten generations on the father's side, and ten generations on the wife's side.

21-23. O Sovereign king, he leads his own soul to the city of Viṣṇu. This rite of fast is like the Cintāmaṇi (wish-yielding stone) or it is equal to a Nidhi (treasuretrove) or it is like the Saṁkalpapādapa (wish-yielding tree). O the most excellent one among kings, those who resort to Dvādaśī (i.e. after observing fast on the previous day who break fast on this day) put forth two more arms (become like viṣṇu four-armed), they ride on the enemy of serpents (i.e. Garuḍa) as their vehicle, they will be having garlands and yellow garments (like Viṣṇu). Thus they go to Hari's abode.

1. The southern portion of the river Sarayū—De. p. 55. According to *Kālikā* P., (Ch. 53), Devikā is a distinct river between Gomati and Sarayū and joins at the confluence of Gaṇḍak and Gaṅgā and the confluence is called Triveṇi.

24. Thus the power of Dvādaśī has been glorified by me, O king, it is called the fire that consumes the terrible fuel of sin.

25. Always the day of Hari should be observed as a day of fast by men, devoted to holiness and piety, who wish for abundant worldly pleasures as well as sons, grandsons etc.

26. The man who observes the day of Hari (Ekādaśī) with great respect, O most excellent one among men, never enters the womb of a mother even if he has committed many sins or even if he observes the fast with or without intention. He goes to the endless region of Viṣṇu, the Lord of the world.

CHAPTER TWO

Discussion on Tithis[1]

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. It was bearing on this same topic that the saintly residents of the Naimiṣa forest asked the highly intelligent Sūta, the disciple of Vyāsa.

1. *Tithi* is the period required by the moon to gain twelve degrees on the sun to the east (*Sūrya-siddhānta, Tithi Tattva* p. 2.). Due to the irregular motion of the moon, the *tithi* varies between 67 to 50 *ghaṭikās*—a finding recorded in the maxim.

Sapta-vṛddhir daśa kṣayaḥ

As a *Tithi* is not coterminus with a 'civil day' and as every religious rite, be it *Vrata, Dāna* etc. must be done at the exact time of the *Tithi* (otherwise it becomes fruitless), this topic has been discussed since very old times. As the word is used in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and Gṛhya and Dharma sūtras, the belief in *Tithi* exists since the 8th Cent. B.C. Works have been devoted to the discussion of the correct time on a *Tithi* for observing *Vratas*. For example, Jīmūta-vāhana's *Kāla-viveka*, Hemādri's CC., *Kāla-mādhava, Nīlakaṇṭha's Kāla-mayūkha, Dharmasindhu* and others.

But this very topic has been discussed previously in NP. I. 29 and elsewhere and the technical terms like *Pūrṇā, Śuddhā, Viddhā* etc., the *Yugma-Vākya* and rules for deciding the Ekādaśi fast etc. have been discussed in details in the annotations to those Chapters and verses. Hence, they are not repeated here.

2. On being asked, that highly pleased one recounted the greatness of Ekādaśī[1] in detail and also the rules of procedure regarding the observance of fast.

3-4a On hearing that statement of the son of Sūta, as well as the greatness of the wielder of discus (god Viṣṇu) that subdues vast multitudes of sins, O king, the excellent Brāhmaṇas again asked Sūta who is devoid of impurities and who is well versed in the Purāṇas.

4b-5. "O bestower of honour, you know the eighteen Purāṇas. Thanks to the favour of the son of virgin[2] '(i.e. Vyāsa) you know the Mahābhārata too. Hence, there is nothing in the Purāṇas or the Smṛtis which you do not know.

6-7a. A doubt is produced in our minds in the story of Raghunātha that is very extensive, containing hundred crores of verses. It behoves you to dispel it by means of factual and detailed explanation.

7b-8a. Is it the end of the Tithi that has to be taken up for the observance of fast. Or is it the root (beginning)? What is the rule regarding this in the rites pertaining to the Devas and those pertaining to the Pitṛs (manes)? Kindly narrate it as there is nothing that is unknown to you.

Sauti said :

8b. In regard to the Devas (i.e. rites pertaining to Devas) the end-period of the Tithi is to be taken for observing fast. Then it is conducive to the increase of their pleasure.

9. The root (beginning) of the Tithi is declared by the knowers of Time as pleasing to the Pitṛs. Hence, the tip is

1. In the previous Chs. in the NP. I discussed *Tithis* with reference to the religious rites like *Śrāddha, Vrata* etc., but this verse and the following discussion makes it clear that the object of this part is disquisition on all aspects of *Ekādaśī Vrata* only.

Another important point here is the conspicuous absence of Nārada. He is neither a listener nor a narrator of NP. Uttarārdha as contrasted with NP. Purvārdha where he is at least the listener.

2. *Kānīna*—A child born of an un-married women. *Mbh. Ādi.* 60.2 tells us that Vyāsa alias Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana was born of an unmarried girl (Matsyagandhā or Satyavatī) on an island in the Yamunā.

taken up for the observance of fast by those who wish to obtain tenfold benefits.

10-12a. The root is to be known for being taken up (for fast) by those who desire for virtue and piety, for the purpose of propitiation of the Pitṛs. Neither Dvitīyā (the second day) nor the Aṣṭamī (the eighth day) nor Ṣaṣṭhī (the sixth day) nor Ekādaśī (the eleventh day) in a human fortnight, O king, should be taken up by those who wish for virtue, love and wealth, if it overlaps (lit. is pierced by) the previous one.

12b. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Saptamī (the seventh day) in lunar fortnight is always to be taken up only when it overlaps the previous one. If any one eschews the following, when they overlap the previous ones, he falls into hell. Those Tithis are Darśa, (the New Moon day), Paurṇamāsa (the Full moon day) and the anniversary day of the father.

13. O king, he will be visited by misfortunes and loss of progeny. O Brāhmaṇas this has been heard by me formerly from Kṛsṇa Dvaipāyana.

14. That Tithi is called Pūrvaviddhā (overlapping the previous one) if there is even a slight trace of it at the time of sunrise. That Tithi should be considered Prabhūta (full) (if it extends throughout) not excluding the time of sunrise.

15. In the rite of Pāraṇā (break-fast) and in the case of death of men, that Tithi is remembered which exists at that particular time. In the case of rites pertaining to Pitṛs, if there is contact of the Tithi at the time of sunset, it is called Pūrṇā (full).

16. In that case, the Tithi at the time of sunrise is not taken into account. But in the case of rites of the deities, the Tithi at the time of sunrise must be taken into account. The intelligent devotee should get the Tithi confirmed through a thoughtful astrologer.

17. O leading Brāhmaṇas, the bases for the extent of the Tithis are the sun and the moon. The knowers of the time reckon it through the movements of moon and the sun.

18. Due to the fault of the contact of the previous Tithi, these are not worthy of being taken up for worship. Those who know about this matter eschew them. O Brāhmaṇas, they eschew all the four Yāmas.

19-20.[1] Henceforth, I shall recount the orderly procedure for bath and worship. If they do not attain purity during the day time, the injunctions are so observed for the night. All the duties of the day must be completely performed at night-fall. This rule has been laid down by me in the case of men who observe fast.

21. O leading Brāhmaṇas, if there is even a little of Dvādaśī at the time of dawn, the rites of ablution, worship, charitable gift, Homa etc. are to be performed then.

22. The breaking of the fast on a pure Trayodaśī day is conducive to the attainment of benefit of (a grant of) land and performance more than a hundred of Yajñas. There is no doubt about it.

23. For this reason, O Brāhmaṇas, the ablution is to be performed alongwith the rite of Pitṛ-Tarpaṇa, early in the morning, without reckoning the day of Dvādaśī.

24. This Dvādaśī, if transgressed (?) by men causes great loss. Like the Sarasvatī who is not washed, it dispels virtue and piety.

25. If there be a loss or increase in the period of Dvādaśī or if it is available at the sunrise, Dvādaśī should be taken advantage of for the purpose of fasting. It is meritorious. One should eschew that Tithi if that overlaps the previous one.

The Brāhamaṇa submitted :

26. O Sūta, kindly explain to me how can there be a fast on the Dvādaśī day if the previous Tithi happens to extend to Dvādaśī.

27-31a. When the day of fast becomes overlapped by the previous Tithi and when there is not even a trace of Ekādaśī on

1. VV. 19-32 lay down the rules of observing Ekādaśī fast by Vaiṣṇavas.

the next day, how is the observance of fast enjoined on that day ? O son of Sūta, pray explain to me.

Sauti said :

O Brāhmaṇas, when on Dvādaśī the previous Tithi is not at all obtainable and the day of the week is Saturday, Sunday or Monday (?) the next day is to be taken up for fasting. Even when there is the risk of contravening many Āgamas and when the Brāhmaṇas raise arguments against it, the holy Dvādaśī should be observed as the day of fast and the break fast (Pāraṇā) is on Trayodaśī (the Thirteenth day of the lunar fortnight).

31b. When Ekādaśī is Viddhā (i.e. it is overlapped by the previous Tithi) and it is the month of Śrāvaṇa, it is the holy Dvādaśī that should be observed as the day of fast, in both the fortnights. This decision, arrived at in accordance with the Śāstras (sacred lore) has been announced to you by me.

32a. What else do you wish to hear? You may be pleased to tell me the same.

The sages said :

32b-33a. O Sauti, tell us the rules regarding the observances on the inaugural days of the Yugas precisely and factually. Similarly, tell us the rules regarding the transit of the sun etc. There is nothing that cannot be understood by you.

Sauti said :

33b-34a. Wise persons know that two of the inaugural days of the Yugas fall in the bright half of the month and two in the dark half. The Tithis in the bright half are to be taken up when they exist in the forenoon, those in the dark half are to be taken up when they exist in the afternoon.

34b-35. The Ayana (the tropical transit) has the part of the day as the basis and the transit time is sixteen Palas (certain unit of time). In the southern portion (transit from the tropic of Cancer) the former one (? the forenoon) is to be taken and in the northern (transit from the tropic of Capricorn) the past

one (the afternoon) is considered (for acceptance). In the middle period of Viṣuva (equinox), it is glorified as Akṣaya (imperishable).

36. O Brāhmaṇas, fast is to be undertaken after knowing precisely the Tithi mentioned for the full year. Otherwise, one is likely to fall into a hell.

37. The man observing fast when it is Pūrvaviddhā breaks Dharma. It is likely to result in death of the progeny and loss of wealth.

38. Just as one eschews the water of the Gaṅgā if it is contaminated by even a drop of liquor, O leading Brāhmaṇa, one should avoid the Ekādaśī day even if there is the overlapping of Daśamī by a single pala (a small unit of time).

39. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, just as one should throw away the Pañcagavya if it is defiled by a dog, so one should do, if Ekādaśī in both the fortnights, is defiled by Daśamī.

40. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the Pūrvaviddhā Ekādaśī Tithi (i.e. the eleventh day with the overlapping of the tenth day) had been formerly given to the Dānavas by the scion of the family of the Yadus (i.e. Viṣṇu) for the propitiation of the noble souls.

41-44a. O excellent Brāhmaṇas the following gifts are no better than gifts offered to Asuras : the monetary gift given at the wrong time, the gift to the undeserving, what is given by the angry donor, what is given after dishonouring the recipient, the gift on a Tithi 'pierced by' the previous Tithi; the gift offered by one who is defiled by ucchiṣṭa (leavings of food), what is given unto the fallen ones, what is gifted to the hen-pecked ones, what is given without water offerings and what is offered with subsequent and frequent allusions to it. Hence, O Brāhmaṇas, the Ekādaśī Tithi should not be observed if it is Viddhā (i.e. when Daśamī overlaps it).

44b-46. Just as the paramour of Śūdra woman defiles the previous merits, Śrāddha, charitable gifts, Japas, Homas and holy dips, so also the Pūjā offered to Hari in a Tithi overlapped by the previous one, undergoes rapid decline like darkness at sunrise. Women proud of their blooming youth and overwhelmed by the fish-bannered Lord (i.e. Kāma or sexual

passion) abandon their ageing husbands. So also the learned men should eschew the Tithi that has the Vedha (overlapping). For the enhancement of Dharma they always adopt other Tithis.

CHAPTER THREE

Yama goes to the Region of Brahmā[1]

The sages said :

1. Kindly narrate in detail the rite of propitiating Viṣṇu, whereby he becomes satisfied and bounteously bestows the cherished desire.

2. The Lord of the Universe, the consort of Lakṣmī, is the destroyer of all the vast multitudes of sins. By what rite will he be pleased alongwith all the mobile and immobile creation (which he pervades through his omni-presence).

Sauti said :

3. Hṛṣīkeśa (Viṣṇu) can be captivated by devotion and not by riches. O Ruler of the Earth, Viṣṇu when duly worshipped with devotion, grants all desires.

4. Hence, O Brāhmaṇas, the devotion to the discus-bearing Lord should always be practised. The Lord of the universe worshipped even by ordinary people, shall be the destroyer of distress.

5. Just as a thirsty man immediately derives satisfaction with water, so is the Lord pleased immediately (with activities of devotion). O Brāhmaṇas, in this connection, a mythological narrative that is destructive of sins, is heard.

1. It is an interesting introduction to the story of Rukmāṅgada and Mohini. This chapter emphasizes the efficacy of the *Ekādaśī Vrata* by describing how Yama has to close his Office as all men, being compelled to observe Ekādaśī by Rukmāṅgada, straightway went to Vaikuṇṭha.

6. It is in the course of conversation between Rukmāṅgada and sage Gautama.

There was a king named Rukmāṅgada.[1] He was an Emperor endowed with the quality of patience and forgiveness.

7. He was a beloved devotee of the deity lying in the Milk Ocean (i.e. Viṣṇu). He was devoted to the day of Hari (i.e. Ekādaśī). The Lord of the Earth does not see anyone other than Padmanābha (Viṣṇu), Lord of the Devas.

8-11. On the day of Hari (Ekādaśī), he used to proclaim through his servants by beating a drum kept on an elephant—"If any man (or woman) aged more than eight years and less than eightyfive years takes food on the day of Viṣṇu, that stupid fellow will be punished, killed or banished out of the city, even if it be my father, brother, son, wife or friend. The person who takes food on the day of Padmanābha (i.e. Viṣṇu) will be worthy of being punished like a robber.[2] Give gifts to leading Brāhmaṇas, have your holy dip in the waters of Jāhnavī. Listen to my words and enjoy my kingdom."

12. Thus on every day of Viṣṇu (Ekādaśī day) in the bright half of the month and especially in the dark half also, the king proclaimed thus through the drums with golden coverings.

13. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, when this was announced by the king throughout the land, the pathway leading to Hari's world (Vaikuṇṭha) was thronged by the people going there.

14. All the men who died in the realm of the king (observing Ekādaśī) whether knowingly or through error, went to the abode of Hari.

1. Rukmāṅgada the son of Ṛtadhvaja, the King of Vidiśā. He is the hero of this story.

2. Hemādri on *Kāla* (p. 172) quotes these verses with a slight difference, but in *Kālanirṇaya* (p. 257) a different text of the same import is quoted as from the NP. The verse is as follows :

atra Nāradaḥ

aṣṭābdād adhiko martyo hyapūrṇāśīti-hāyanaḥ /
bhuṅkte yo mānavo mohād ekādaśyāṁ sa pāpakṛt //

15. O Brāhmaṇas, the world of Viṣṇu is definitely attained by men even if they fraudulently observe the rite of Ekādaśī that is destructive of sins.

16. He who takes food on the day of Hari consumes the sin of the whole of the Earth. He who does not eat food on the day of Hari, attains the virtue (religious merit) of the entire Earth.

17. The Smṛti following the Vedas says :
"A Brāhmaṇa should not be killed so also Food should not be taken on the Ekādaśī day in both the fortnights."

18. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the king, the son of the Sun (i.e. Yama) became embarrassed. Citragupta[1] had ample rest in his writing activity.

19. Everything that had been written by him based on the activities of the previous births was erased and struck off by him (since) the men instantaneously went over to Viṣṇu's abode through their holy rites.

20. All the hells became devoid of sinful creatures. The pathway leading to Yama's world became scorched by the twelve Ādityas and delapidated.

21. All the people went to Hari's region riding on Garuḍa. The worlds of the Devas also became vacant and tenantless.

22. The sacrifices to the Pitṛs and the Devas, pilgrimage to holy centres, charitable gifts and other holy rites became out of vogue. Excepting Ekādaśī, men did not know any other Vrata.

23. When the heaven and the hell became empty, Nārada went to Dharmarāja (Yama) and said :—

Nārada said :

24. "O King, no cry is heard in your court-yard and in the hells. Nothing is being noted down in writing about the evil-doers.

25. This Citragupta[1] is sitting silent like a sage. What is the reason whereby no sinner comes to your abode ?

1. Citragupta—the record-keeper of merits and sins of human beings, in Yama's Office.

26-27a. No one engaged in wicked actions comes to your threshold. None in the grip of deception and arrogance comes to your abode."

When these words were uttered by the noble-souled Nārada, Vaivasvata (son of the Sun), the king of the world of Death said with a little disconcertedness :

Yama said :

27b-28. O Nārada, the King who is now ruling over the Earth is a great devotee of Hṛṣīkeśa (Lord Viṣṇu). This leading king instructs the people announcing on the beating of the drum.

29. "Nothing should be eaten, nothing should be eaten at all on the day of Hari. The men who take food shall be liable to punishment."

30-31. Being afraid of him, all the people observe fast on the Ekādaśī day. O excellent sage, those who even fraudulently observe fast on the Ekādaśī day, go to the world of Viṣṇu which is devoid of burning and dissolution (at the end of Kalpa). By resorting to Ekādaśī (Vrata) people go to Hari's palace.

32. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the paths leading to my world have been made empty by that king now. The hells as well as the worlds of heaven-dwellers have been made vacant by him.

33. The writers (Yama's accountants of deeds of men) are taking rest. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, what has been already written is erased and written off, thanks to the greatness of the fast on the Ekādaśī day.

34. O Brāhmaṇa, without experiencing the fruits of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter and other sins, people go to Hari's mansion by observing fast on the day of Viṣṇu.

35. O great sage, I have become one resembling a wooden deer. I am like a person devoid of eyes and ears, like a Brāhmaṇa who has eschewed Sandhyā prayers.

36. I am like a hen-pecked husband, or like an impotent husband of a youthful woman. I have abandoned all desire for such a post of guardianship of the world.

37-38a. I shall now go to the region of Brahmā to report to him about my misery. If an employee who is to abide by the behest of his master does not work actively but goes on eating the wealth of his master, he shall certainly go to hell.

Sauti said :

38b-41. O Brāhmaṇas, after saying this, Yama went to the abode of Virañci (god Brahmā) accompanied by Nārada and followed by Citragupta. He beheld there seated the great-grand-father of all, surrounded by both embodied and bodiless people—Brahmā the seed of the universe, the support of the universe, the self-born deity, the abode of all living beings. He was free from sin, and was designated as Oṁkāra. He is Śuci (pure) and Śucipada (of pure region). Brahmā, the Supreme Soul (Haṁsa) holding Kuśa grass was being worshipped by the different guardians of the quarters and rulers of the worlds.

42-47. He was being served by all these (in person) : viz —the Epics, Purāṇas and Vedas in their embodied forms; he was served by the oceans, the rivers and the lakes that had assumed bodily forms; the trees such as the holy fig tree and others served him by taking up human bodies; so also the tanks, wells, lakes, mountains, days and nights, fortnights, months, years, Kalās, Kāṣṭhās and Nimeṣas (units of time), seasons, transits of the suns, Yugas, Manvantaras, Kalpas, closing and opening of the eyelids (the smallert unit of time) constellations, Yogas (combinations) Karaṇas, (astronomical divisions), full-moon days, declines of the moon, new-moon days, Dvandvas (i.e. mutually clashing opposites such as happiness and misery, profits and loss, success and failures, truth and falsehood—all these were serving the deity. The Lord of the Devas, the sanctifier of righteousness, was surrounded by them. He was being served by persons who knew the holy rites and who were befitting him. The grandfather was being served by Sattva, Rajas. and Tamas Guṇas.

48-50. The lord was served and surrounded by the emotions such as Śānta, (calm), Mūḍha (confused) and Ati-ghora (exceedingly terrible); by the wind, phlegm and bile (the humours), by the embodied Ātaṅka (agony) etc. and by Ānanda

bliss; the soul of the universe had recourse to the greatest Dharma; the creator of the worlds himself was surrounded by other living beings not mentioned here; he was being served by the embodiments of evil words and harsh statements etc. Yama the son of the Sun, entered the place amidst them like a bashful bride.

51-55. With his head bent down and glance directed beneath to the floor, he appeared before them. On seeing Yama entering alongwith Nārada and his Kāyastha (accountant i.e. Citragupta) the people there were surprised. With surprised looks they spoke to one another—"Why ? How comes it to be that Bhāskari (son of the Sun i.e. Yama) has come here to see the Creator and the grand-sire of the worlds ? This son of Sun never remains inactive even for a moment. He is always active. Then how is it that he has come now. I hope everything is all right with the heaven-dwellers. I consider this as the wonder of wonders, that the clerk (Chitragupta) has come with his (writing) cloth completely erased and clean. He is full of great distress. No person who performs holy rites has ever erased his cloth. What has never been seen or heard is being seen now."

56-58. O Brāhmaṇa, even as they were speaking mutually thus, the son of Sun (i.e. Yama) who used to chastise all living beings, fell in front of god Brahmā, just like a tree the root of which is cut. He cried aloud "O save me, O save me, O Lord of the Devas, I have been overwhelmed and oppressed since my writing cloth has been erased clean. While you are my Lord, O Lotus-seated one, I find myself distressed." O excellent Brāhmaṇas, after saying this he became unconscious, motionless.

59-61. Then a tumultuous commotion arose in the assembly, "He who makes all the worlds consisting of the mobile and immobile beings, is himself distressed and is crying. Why is Yama, the son of the Sun, crying? Or this common saying seems to be a statement of truth – the saying "He who distresses the people ere long is distressed himself. No man who commits an evil action ever attains auspicious results."

62-64. Thereafter, knowing the view of god Brahmā, Vāyu the Wind-god, silenced the talk of those people of the

same mind (i.e. holding the same opinion regarding Yama and his arrival there) The liberal-minded Vāyu raised Yama slowly with his brawny well-developed hands. He placed him on a seat even as he was agitated and was about to run away. He spoke to Yama the son of Sun, having the Ethereal form and accompanied by his Kāyastha (Accounts-clerk Citragupta).

65-67. "By whom have you been attacked? By whom have you been displaced and banished? By whom has your cloth (record) of the world, the divine cloth, been erased? Speak out everything completely. Or may this god Brahmā say? O dear one, he who is the lord of all, shall grant you the uplift. O son of Mārtaṇḍa (Sun), he will remove all the misery in your heart."

68. On being addressed thus by the Windgod, Yama, the son of the Lord of Day (the Sun), looked to the face of Nārada, the son of Brahmā and slowly uttered the following words in a voice choked with tears.

CHAPTER FOUR

An Appeal by Yama

Yama said :

1. O Lord Pitāmaha, Grandsire of the world, listen to my words. O Lord, humiliation of one's exploits is worse than death.

2. O lotus-born deity, he who is devoid of selfish motives and desire, and does not carry out his appointed task, falls into hell which is like a blind well.

3. O lotus-seated one, the employee who does not implement the direction, but continues to consume the wealth of his master, shall be a worm in the decaying wood.

4. The employee who, out of greed, consumes (i.e. misappropriates) the wealth of the common subjects or the king falls into hell for a period of three hundred Kalpas.

5. He who is interested only in selfish gains and so robs

his master, shall be a slow-witted mouse in the house for three hundred Kalpas.

6. The employee who, enjoying himself in his house, shirks his own work and compels the king's servants to do his work also, shall take the birth of a cat.

7-8a. O Lord ! It is at your behest that after due consultation with sages and texts on DharmaŚāstra that I had been administering justice and governing the subjects commending the merit of the meritorious and condemning the sin of the sinners.

8b-9. Since the beginning of the present Kalpa so long as it is your day, I can carry out my duties by dint of your command. But today I have been defeated (and overpowered) in my work by King Rukmāṅgada.[1]

10. O Lord of the Universe, afraid of that king, the entire ocean-girt Earth does not eat anything on the day of Viṣṇu (the Ekādaśī day) that is destructive of all sins.

11. People eschew all holy rites; they abandon the worship of Pitṛs, they do not worship Devas, they neglect pilgrimages, holy ablutions and other good rites.

12. O bestower of honour, they eschew both the systems of philosophy—Yoga and Sāṅkhya. They neglect the perfect knowledge and the knowable; they abandon self study of Vedas and the performance of Homas; (over and above all these) they commit many number of sins.

13-15a. Still they go to the region of Viṣṇu by observing fast on the day of Hari. They go to the world of Viṣṇu alongwith their fathers and grandfathers. Their fathers and father's fathers, mother's fathers, their fathers and their ancestors—all these go to the world of Viṣṇu.

15b-19. O Lord, this is the misery that cuts me to the quick wiping off my writings (i.e. decrees), the fathers of their beloved ones go to the abode of Viṣṇu(?). A man is born of the seed of his ancestors, he is held in the belly of the bearer (woman). He who commits any sin, has to experience the fruits

1. VV. 9-25 a: This is another way of describing the glory and efficacy of the *Ekādaśī Vrata*.

thereof. But O Brahmā, the seed that originates from the nurse is sown by another. It may perhaps redeem both the sides, the one who is offered the Piṇḍa and the one to whom the body belongs. But the wife has no seed nor the wife holds him in her womb. Then, O Lord of the Universe, how does her side attain the greatest region through the greatness of the merit of the son-in-law ? Therefore, my head aches.

20. O Lord, no purpose of mine is served, thanks to this sort of employment, whoever observes fast on the Ekādaśī day leaves me off and goes to Hari.

21. O Lotus-born deity, he uplifts three generations including himself. After leaving off my path, he goes to Hari's mansion.

22-24. No man attains such a destination as that of a devotee who performs the holy rite of Viṣṇu—Not even if he performs sacrifices (Yajñas), goes on pilgrimage to the holy centres or gives charitable gifts or performs those Vratas with the exception of those pertaining to Viṣṇu. No one giving up life in water or fire attains such a goal. O god Brahmā neither the person who gives up his body by the Yoga practice nor he who falls down from a precipice attains that goal. O most excellent one among those who attain good goals, it is the truth that has been uttered by me.

25. Any human being, even if he perpetrates extremely wicked actions, goes to the world of Dharaṇīdhara (Viṣṇu who holds and supports the Earth). If the man smears his limbs with the fruits of embylic myrobalan and if he has no interest in sweet juices and meals on the Ekādaśī day.

26. I have become disappointed because I have no work on the Earth. Hence, I have resorted to your pair of lotuslike feet. O cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution (of the universe) make time propitious for the attainment of fearlessness on this mere intimation.*

*But if the reading is *sarga-sthiti-nāśa-hetoḥ* as in my text, the verse means.

"O Lord, who grant immunity from fear by mere request, fix up the time for attaining creation, sustenance and destruction."

27. May not the sinful men be devoid of restraint through my Bhūtagaṇas (attendants). Let them be chained or tied with ropes. Let them come near me and be under my control.

28. The path oppressed by the heat of the sun is broken because crowds of people are being released very quickly at the hands of Viṣṇu's attendants from the hell Kumbhī. They go to the splendid abode of the lord who is greater than the greatest.

CHAPTER FIVE

The lamentation of Yama

Yama continued:

1. The path of the discus-bearing lord has been furnished and rubbed, O deity worshipped by the three worlds, by men who pass through it without break.

2. O Lord of the Universe, I consider the world of Viṣṇu to be infinite in magnitude, since it is not filled with the floods of people with all living beings cropping up like lotuses.

3-4. O Pitāmaha, (Grandsire of the universe) people adhering to their duties, people following other men's duties, pure people and impure people, every one observes fast on the day of Viṣṇu and goes to the world of Viṣṇu, at the behest of the king. The entire world is accommodated only in the residence of Mādhava. This king is hence our great enemy. He is particularly your enemy as well.

5. O Lord of the worlds, undoubtedly he must be curbed and restrained. For the last one thousand years, he has ruled over the sphere of the world.

6-8a. Immeasurable number of persons have been taken over by him to the world beloved of Hari. They were enabled to ride Garuḍa. They were given forms having four arms; they were neatly clad in yellow garments; they were garlanded and smeared with sweet-smelling unguents. If he

continues to abide by the holy rite of Ekādaśī, O Lord of Devas, this beloved devotee of Viṣṇu will take the entire world to the region of Viṣṇu free from ailments.

8b-9. This staff of justice and this cloth (the scroll recording details of acts of omission and commission of men) have been released by your feet (i.e. by you). My incomparable guardianship of the world has been nullified by that king Rukmāṅgada. Blessed is that lady who has borne him.

10. If the son is superior to others in good qualities, he becomes competent to destroy the miseries of his mother. Of what avail is a child that is born, if it brings distress to its mother ?

11. If the son does not harass his enemies like the sun in the month of Jyeṣṭha, the labour pain of the mother has gone in vain. O Lord, she is one having a bad son.

12-13a. That son is called the ailment or diseased part from the mother's womb born on this earth, if his fame does not shine like the lightning among the clouds, the son who does not uplift his father's side through learning or strength.

13b-16. The son who is deprived of virtue, wealth and love, though born on the Earth is only an ailment in the belly of his mother. His life is futile. O Brahmā, there is undoubtedly one heroic mother—the lady from whom is born Rukmāṅgada for the purpose of erasing my writings. Such a thing as this has never been accomplished by any king. O Lord of the Universe, even in the Purāṇas (or even since ancient times) this wiping off of the cloth has not been heard of. Seeing this king adhering to his service to Hari, proclaiming aloud by means of drum and destroying the path leading to my mansion, I cannot continue to be alive.

CHAPTER SIX

God Brahmā's Reply

Brahmā said :

1. What surprising thing has been seen by you ? Why do your feel distressed ? Distress at the good points in others is an agony that lasts till death.

2. O Sauri (Son of the Sun), how does a man not attain the highest region by observing fast on the day of the Lord, the mere utterance of whose name enables one to attain the same ?

3. A single bow offered to Kṛṣṇa is on a par with the sacred final (Avabhṛtha) ablutions in ten horse-sacrifices. Moreover, the person who performs ten horse-sacrifices may be reborn in this Saṁsāra, but the man who makes obeisance to Kṛṣṇa is never reborn.

4. If at the tip of one's tongue the two syllables HARI are present, what has one to do with the holy centres of Kurukṣetra, Kāśī and Vraja ?

5-6. A Brāhmaṇa who indulges in sexual intercourse with a Cāṇḍāla woman, especially during her monthly course, and eats food cooked in spirituous liquor, can eschew heaps of sins accumulated by perpetrating forbidden acts of eating the forbidden food and of cohabiting with a forbidden woman, if he but remembers Hari at the time of death. He (thereby) attains (Sāyujya (complete identity) with Viṣṇu and is liberated from the bondage of worldly existence.

7. If one gets salvation on uttering his name, how is it that he should not get it by observing fast on his day ? He who is sung about in it (fasting period), is the Puruṣottama who becomes contemplated.

8. Even if he were to utter the name of Lord Janārdana sportingly or listens to it, a man acquires equality with the waters of Gaṅgā in regard to sanctity and meritoriousness.

9. Puruṣottama, the Sovereign Lord of the worlds, is the cause of our birth. How can a wicked-minded fellow (like

you) chastise the person who observes fast on his (Viṣṇu's) day ?

10. That you have not been ground down into powder, that you have not been tightly bound by them, is due to the honour bestowed on us. You are not trying to understand the real point from me.

11. The employee who does not know the most excellent and loyal devotees of the king on the Earth is subjected to arduous exertion and is again kept captive by them.

12. Persons favourite with the king should not be apprehended as culprits by an employee (a servant of a king). Achieving their objects through the favour of the master, they may get the employee dismissed.

13. Similar is the position of the sinners who bow down to Janārdana. How will you restrain them out of foolhardiness, O son of Bhāskara ?

14. O son of Divākara (Sun-god), O son of Bhāskara I may help you with the devotee of Śiva or Bhāskara (Sun-god) or my own devotees, but never with the devotees of Hari.

15. Puruṣottama is the Primordial deity among all Devas.

16. Restraining the devotecs of Madhusūdana (God Viṣṇu) is not proper even if they fraudulently observe the holy rite of Ekādaśī during the lunar fortnight.

17-18. If they have slighted you, I cannot help you. O son of the Sun, if any help is rendered to you that will be injustice to me. It may even destroy my body. There may even be reversion from the post of Brahmā that is attained through high merit which I have achieved during the course of my life in the company of Viṣṇu's devotees.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The statement of Brahmā

Yama submitted :

1-2a. Dear grand-sire, in bowing down at the feet of the Veda, the benefit has been achieved by me. O Lord of the Universe, I shall not go again and join my duties while the king called Rukmāṅgada is ruling over the world.

2b-3. O excellent one among the deities, if when the day of Hari arrives, you are able to shake him from his courageous resolve, I shall be your servant. O Lord, he is my great foe. My cloth (account of merits and sins) has been rubbed (and erased) by him.

4. By making him take his food on the day of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Ekādaśī), I shall feel as if I have accomplished all my objects like a person who has offered balls of rice to the manes at Gayā.

5. From today onwards, those persons cannot be restrained by me—those persons by whom Hari, the Lord of the Devas, is remembered or eulogised or by whom the fast is undertaken on his day.

6. Those men who burst into ejaculation, even fraudulently, with the word 'Hari', are liberated from the path leading to the mother's womb. They are clever people. They do not enter the sphere of writing on my cloth (of virtue and sins). They are worthy of being bowed down to by the excellent groups of heaven-walkers (i.e. gods).

Sauti said :

7. In connection with the affair (problem) of the son of Vivasvān (i.e. Yama), the Kuśa-emblemed god Brahmā had a desire to do something in his honour. He therefore pondered thus.

8-9. The Lord, adorned by the Bhūtas (living beings) pondered for a moment. The omnipresent Lord thereafter assumed a form that would terrify all living beings. He, thereafter, procreated therein a young woman who fascinated the worlds. That gentle lady, mentally created by him, the most excellent of all beautiful women, appeared splendid.

10-11. Fully bedecked in all ornaments, she stood in front of him. On seeing her fully endowed with the wealth of beauty, he (Brahmā) spoke to his own people who being deluded by lust for her, were ogling at her. Brahmā closed his eyes for fear of committing a sinful offence.

12-13. He who looks with lustful eyes or thinks about with lascivious mind, at one's own mother, or daughter, daughter-in-law or brother's wife, preceptor's wife or the king's wife falls into the terrible hell; by thinking about a Cāṇḍāla woman also, the man falls into a hell.

14. The man who becomes perturbed on seeing these young women, loses all his merits acquired in the course of various births. His merits thus become futile but not otherwise.

15. If he indulges in sexual intercourse with them, ten thousand merits of his are wasted away. As the merit goes on diminishing he becomes more and more sinful and eventually he is born as a rock-rat.

16-17. Hence no intelligent man should think about them or see them with lustful eyes. Once the sons have attained their twelfth year, they must not stroke the feet of even their mother. The mother should not get herself applied with oil over her body by sons who have reached the age of youth then. A clever son may engage his mother whose age is more than sixty, in anointing his body with oil.

18. Whether an old man or a young man, no one shall ask his daughter-in-law to massage his feet. It is proclaimed that both of them will fall into the Raurava hell full of burning coal.

19-20. O king, the daughter-in-law who shows her uncovered limbs to her father-in-law shall be knocked and kicked and will be eaten by worms therein in the hell. The same goal awaits that sinful man who gets his feet cleaned by the hands of his daughter-in-law or makes her bathe him or smear oil over him. In the hell, he shall be eaten by worms with needlelike snouts and black faces, for a period of one full Kalpa.

21. Hence no man shall glance at other's women, or one's own daughter or daughter-in-law with lustful eyes and thoughts. Immediately the man falls or incurs sins.

22-23. It was because he thought over like this that he looked at her, with a subtle, penetrating view-point. It is nothing but a mere skeleton (lit. cage) of bones covered with flesh and skin that appears a face, lofty, circular and splendid. The shining eyes seen present in women comprise suet and flesh.

24. The extremely protruding mass of flesh has been piled up over the breasts. The three folds of skin on the upper part of the belly (which are regarded as a mask of beauty) show lesser (distribution of) flesh.

25. In the buttocks again, more flesh has been stacked. This is the passage for urine. It is a private part, of which the three worlds are enamoured.

26. It is joined with the Apāna wind (i.e. this wind functions there). It is always vile (with bad odour) and contemptible always. More flesh is heaped up than the swollen bellows in the part of the buttocks.

27. Just as a log of wood is sawn into two (half way through), so also is the region of shanks (thighs ?). It (the body) is filled with semen, flesh, bone, fat and marrow. How can it be beautiful ?

28. What is there by way of essence, in the body of men wherein the main constituents are flesh, fat and marrow ? Tell me which man will be enamoured of the body, nourished and grown plump by means of faeces, urine and other dirts.

29. Viriñci (God Brahmā) pondered thus, after seeing everything with his vision of knowledge. He took courage and spoke to that lady whose gait was like that of a female elephant.

30. "O fair-complexioned lady, since you have been created by me mentally you have become a lady of beautiful limbs, competent to madden the minds of men."

31-33a. Then she bowed to the fourfaced God and said : "O Lord, see the entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings deluded and falling unto senselessness. It includes even the Yogins who are totally sinless. O lotus-born deity, keeping you in the beginning (inclusive of you), there is no man in the three worlds who does not get agitated and perturbed on seeing me.

33b-34. Boasting about oneself should not be indulged in by one who wishes for one's own auspicious welfare. Even an extremely pure man falls into hell due to selfpraise. Still, O Brahmā, the glorification or self-praise must be stated to achieve some special end.

35. O Brahmā, indeed, it must be to make some one excited and perturbed that I have been created by you. O Lord of the Universe, command me. Mention who he is. I shall definitely make him excited.

36-37. O Lord, on seeing me even a mountain becomes infatuated. What then of an ordinary man endowed with consciousness who inhales and exhales ? The description of the powerful impact of a woman's glance is described in the Purāṇas. It causes madness in men and is destructive of all holy vows and rites difficult to be observed.

38. Till then the man treads the path of the good, till then the man has perfect control over his sense organs, till then he retains his humility and sense of shame, till the shaft-like glances of dalliance-minded damsels pierce his heart and destroy his fortitude. The shafts that are discharged from the well-drawn bow of the eye-brow, the eyes having blue lashes, reach up to the ears.[1]

39. Fie upon the poetry of that stupid ill-informed poet who equates the face of a lady to the moon. Is there any of these in the moon—viz. the knitting of the eyebrow, the side-glances expressing the wounding look, fury, pleasure and laughter ?

40. O Lord, only when it is drunk does the spirituous liquor cause delusion in the mind of a clever man. But a youthful maiden excites delusion even when she is seen or remembered by a man. So she is more powerful than the spirituous liquor.

41. O great grand sire of the world I have been created

1. Just as an archer bends his bow stretching the bow-string up to his ear and discharges the arrow which pierces the heart of the enemy, the shaft-like glances are discharged from the bow-like bent eye-brows of women with blue eye-lashes—eyes which are long upto the ears. Such longish eyes were traditionally regarded beautiful.

by you for fascinating men. Command me. Who is it ? I shall enchant even the three worlds.

Brahmā said :

42. O Lady with thighs like the trunk of an elephant, O fortunate one with the gait like that of an elephant in rut, the truth has been expressed by you. There is nothing that cannot be achieved by you in the three worlds.

43. O fair-complexioned lady, you are defiling even my mind also although I control and steady it by means of the goad of perfect knowledge.

44. Such being your charm how then will you not captivate the minds of people ? O large-eyed lady, truly your beauty of form is seductive.

45. I find that the entire Universe including the immortal being, is motionless. O excellent-faced lady, achieve that for which you have been created.

46. O auspicious lady, on the earth, in the city of Vidiśā[1] there is a king named Rukmāṅgada whose wife Sandhyāvalī is comparable to you in beauty.[2]

47. His son Dharmāṅgada was born of her. The son surpasses the father. He is endowed with the strength of a hundred elephants. He is like the sun in exploits.

48-52. In forbearance he is equal to the Earth; in profundity he is comparable to the ocean; like the fire, he shines with his brilliance, he is comparable to Vaivasvata Yama, God of Death in fury; he is like Bali in munificence; he is comparable to the wind god in mobility; in gentleness he is equal to the moon; he is as handsome as Manmatha the god of love; the prince is equal to Jīva (Bṛhaspati) and Bhārgava

1. A few years back (under the British) it was called Bhilsa. Now its old name Vidiśā has been adopted. In the NP. here and in the *Devī Purāṇa* (Ch. 76) it is called Vidiśā.

2. VV. 46-73 contain instructions and guidance given by god Brahmā to Mohinī how to make king Rukmāṅgada break his Ekādaśī Vrata and thereby make people go to the region of Yama. This plot in a nutshell is developed in details in subsequent chapters. The denouement is very interesting.

(Śukra) (preceptors of Devas and Daityas) in statesmanship. O fair-faced lady, the entire Jambūdvīpa alone is enjoyed by his father (Rukmāṅgada). But the other Dvīpas (continents) are conquered by Dharmāṅgada. He has not yet known the thrill of a contact with a youthful maiden due to his bashfulness. Thousands of women come to him of their own accord but they are avoided by him. He does not move astray from his pledged word.

53. O fortunate lady with sweet smiles, in his father's house three hundred mothers look upon him equally without any difference in their affection, O lady with gold-like complexion !

54. O woman of beautiful limbs ! On the excellent mount Mandara, approach the King to whom Dharma is of prominent importance and who is adorned with the jewel of a son.

55. The king carried away to that place by his horse will stay there enamoured of your song, O woman of beautiful limbs, even leaving off his horse.

56-57. Climbing on to the top of the mountain he will come into contact with you. On meeting the king there, O gentle lady, you must say thus : — O king, undoubtedly, I will become your wife. But O lord, whatever I say must be definitely carried out by you.

58-62. Enamoured of your beauty the king will promise it to you. Thereupon, after a few days have elapsed you shall hold him by the right hand with imprecations. O woman of lovely eyebrows and charming limbs, when the king appears to be rapturously eager for cohabitation with you, you shall laughingly remind the king of his earlier words : "O King, you have sworn that you will abide by my word. Hence, O king, keep your promise. I think the time has now come for the same." When this is said by you, the king will certainly say thus on account of the high value and importance of the promise. "There is no doubt about it, I shall keep it. Tell me what shall I give you?" When he replies thus, O auspicious fair-faced lady, Rukmāṅgada, the king and father of Dharmāṅgada must be addressed thus by you.

63-68a. "Never should the fast be observed on the Ekādaśī day of Hari. O my darling, your fast is a hindrance to

my sexual intercourse with you. He who does not attend to his own wife who is charming and who is endowed with youthful virility, he who expects another opportunity (i.e. he who postpones) is a man of wicked actions. Certainly, he goes to hell. Due to your fasting, I am abandoned by you for three nights. But actually I am incapable of staying even a moment without you. When the time of Śrāddha has come and the Brāhmaṇas sit and wait (for the performance), if the wife solicits the husband for cohabitation, she must be enjoyed at the very same time."

O woman of sweet limbs, even after being urged thus, if the king does not carry out your request, you shall say thus thereafter :

68b-69. "O King if you do not abandon your fast on the day of Hari, cut off the head of your own son Dharmāṅgada with an excellent sword, and place it on my lap.

70. O king if you do not carry out this loving wish of mine, you shall become deficient in virtue, merits and you will undoubtedly fall into hell."

71-72. O excellent lady, if, on hearing your words, he does not injure his son who is like his own vital breath unto him, he shall pay heed to the advice of the Brāhmaṇas and shall take food on the day of Ekādaśī. Thereupon, the people will go near Yama as before after being tied with ropes by the attendants. Taking the writing (of Chitragupta) as authority, there will be persons occupying hell. Thus what you do will be splendid.

73. Or if the glorious king, abiding by the promise, really kills his son he will go to the region of Padmanābha, that is worthy of being worshipped by the immortal beings wholly.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The description of Mount Mandara

Sauti said :

1. On hearing the words of Brahmā, that lotus-eyed woman said—"Give a name unto me with which I should go to Mandara mountain.

2. O Lord of the Universe, children must be named by the father. The name is said to be destructive of sins. O Kuśa-emblemed God, kindly do so."

Brahmā said :

3. Since, O beautiful woman, the entire universe is enchanted by you. O gentle lady, Mohinī (enchantress) as your name shall be true to your attributes.

4. O woman of lovely eyebrows, if he comes into a pleasure-giving contact with you, thanks to a clear vision of yours, he will have to experience all the ten states of a love-lorn lover).

5. On being thus commanded, the fair lady bowed down to the lotus-seated deity and set off to the mountain Mandara wistfully gazed at on the way by the immortal ones (gods).

6. By the third Muhūrta (one Muhurta— = 48 minutes) she reached the summit of the mountain. It had been impossible for Vāsuki to go round it once (i.e. to encircle it bodily).[1]

7. It was this mountain that was formerly lifted up by Hari (in the form of Divine Tortoise) and used for churning (the milk ocean) by the Devas and Dānavas. Sindhu (the ocean) which extends to six hundred thousand Yojanas is the deep pit made by this mountain.

1. This refers to the churning of the ocean by gods and demons for attaining nectar. Mount Mandara was used as the churning rod and serpent Vāsuki as the string to wind round it for churning (Mbh-*Adi*-Ch.18). The Mbh. regards mount Mandara of the Himalayan range as the real Mandara. The claim of a hill 30 miles to the south of Bhagalpur in Bhagalpur district, with grooves of artificial chiselling to indicate the impression of the coils of a serpent, disqualifies its claim of being the real Mandara—De. 124-125.

8. This great mountain was not broken even when it rubbed against the physical body of the Divine Tortoise. O leading king, when it fell into the ocean all the hidden parts of the ocean were exposed by this mountain.

9. O Brāhmaṇas, water gushed out from this mountain went up through the path of the Brahmāṇḍa (Cosmic Egg). Great fire was generated by this mountain due to attrition when it came into contact with the bony shell of the (Divine) Tortoise.

10. It is on this mountāin that Lord Digambara (naked deity i.e. Śiva) resides along with his goblins, but, O exellent Brāhmaṇas, he is not visible either to the Devas or to the Dānavas.

11. It was for a great period of time viz. ten thousand years that this mountain ground and rubbed the armlets of the discus-bearing Lord.[1]

12. This is a veritable mansion of jewels equipped with many kinds of minerals.

13. It is the sporting ground of the heaven-dwellers; it is the place for penance of the sages, it enhances the zest of the divine maidens for sexual dalliance; this great mountain is the source of jewels and medicinal herbs.

14. Its girth at the root is ten thousand Yojanas, its width at the top is also that much. With the length too being as many Yojanas, it rises up as the measuring rod of the three world.

15. It illuminates the surface of the Earth and the sky by means of its golden peaks full of jewels and gems. On reaching it the son of Kaśyapa (i.e. Sun) loses his splendour. He becomes devoid of rays.

16-17. The lady of golden splendour reached the Mandara mountain whose parts are the abodes of gold (ingots). Endowed with her own splendour she made the mountain Mandara the destroyer of the brilliance of the sun, (i.e. surpass it)

1. The description of the churning for *Amṛta* differs slightly in the Mbh and other Purāṇas in minor details. But the object of the NP. here is to describe the glory of mount Mandara and not the churning of the nectar.

with her own lustre. For the purpose of exciting the lustful passion of the king, she sat on the rocky surface of the mountain that extended to seven Yojanas and that had a divine bluish splendour.

18. O leading king,[1] there stands on that rocky surface an adamantine Liṅga, ten Hastas in height as well as in girth.

19. It is famous by the name of Vṛṣaliṅga. It appeared like a great palace among the clouds. O excellent Brāhmaṇas that girl gave a sweet and excellent performance of music.

20. That charming lady sat near that Liṅga and played on the strings of the lute beating time harmoniously. Her songs were exquisitely destructive of tedium.

21-22. It had the Mūrcchanā (the regulated rise and fall of sounds) and the Tāla (beating time). It had the Gandhāra note in its composition. O leading king (?), when the song that heightened passionate love flowed forth from her like this, O leading sages, even the immobile beings began to desire it. Neither divine nor non-divine music had ever been like that before.

23-24. On hearing that sweet note flowing out of the mouth of Mohinī, the note that enchanted all living beings, Lord Śiva became lustful and wanted to enjoy her in that very form of Digambara (nakedness). But, on being seen by Pārvatī he felt ashamed.

1. We are to suppose that the words of address 'O king' in such contexts, are addressed to King Māndhātā by Vasiṣṭha.

CHAPTER NINE

A dialogue between Rukmāṅgada and Dharmāṅgada

Sauti said :

1-3. O Brāhmaṇas, the leading king Rukmāṅgada enjoyed all human pleasure. In diverse ways he worshipped the yellow-robed Lord Hari. He had already placed his feet on the heads of his enemies who dared to fight him. By making the pathway leading to Yama's land empty he conquered Yama, the son of Vivasvat (Sun). He made the path of Viṣṇu's world thronged with human beings. At the proper time, he called his son Dharmāṅgada and spoke thus :

4. "O son, protect this earth full of wealth all round, with your own might. Be firmly resolved in your own duties.

5. If the father does not hand over the kingdom when the son has become competent, there is no doubt in this that his merits and fame perish.

6. The father who does not feel happiness, thanks to his efficient son, must be certainly known as the greatest sinner in the three worlds.

7. The son who, after becoming strong enough to do so, does not take up the burden of his father, is no better than the excrement of his mother. He is a two-tongued serpent devoid of poison.

8. He is the real son who becomes more famous than the father on this Earth and illuminates the places like the sun with his rays.

9. If the father keeps awake during the night due to the sorrow resulting from the misdemeanour of the son, the son stays in hell till the final dissolution of all living beings.

10. He who honours the words of his father and carries out his behests in the house, attains Sāyujya with the deity, while he will be eulogised by the gods stationed in the heaven.

11. O son, as for me, I have been attracted by holy actions in the world for the sake of subjects. Stationed

in the activity of protection (i.e. abiding by my duty as their protector) I have never enjoyed or slept of my own accord.

12. O son, As long as you were unable to shoulder the responsibilities of the kingdom, ease and happiness was not attained by me, as I was determined to restrain those who partook of food on the day of Lord Viṣṇu (i.e. on Ekādaśī days).

13. Among the people some (i.e. Śaivites) followed the path of the devotees of Śiva. Some abided by the path of the Sun, others were the followers of Brahmā, while others (i.e. Śāktas) stood in the path of Pārvatī.[1]

14-16. (Many excuses were offered by people for eating food on Ekādaśī day). "In the morning and in the evening, we are sitting up and performing the Agnihotra (Fire-worship) rites. Moreover a small boy, a young man, an old man, a pregnant woman, a small girl, a sick man or a physically handicapped person cannot undertake a fast." When people protested like this, I refuted them everywhere by means of words mentioned in the Purāṇas. I spent many days over this. For the purpose of abiding happiness of the subjects, I enlightened them in various ways.

17-18. I chastised them and made them desist from taking food. The scholars were made to refrain from food (on the authority of sacred scriptures (i.e. they were convinced that sacred texts prescribed the Ekādaśī rite). The ignorant people were made to refrain from taking food by chastising them by means of deterrent punishment. Thus all were forced to observe fast on the day of Hari. Thereby being thus engaged I did not enjoy any personal happiness on the Earth.

19. O dear son, the king who wishes to protect his subjects shall not inflict on them miseries from himself or from others (from his own people or officers or through enemies).

1. This shows that at the time of the NP, the sects of god Brahmā and Sun were equally prominent like the Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Śākta sects.

20. To such a king ever-lasting worlds have been declared (as a reward) in the Purāṇas. I exist for the sake of the subject O gentle boy, and never for myself.

21. I wish to enjoy the pleasures derived from hunting and other strenuous exercises. O son, I never desire the pleasures of drinking bouts and gambling.

22-23. Dear son, a king indulging in these vices will perish ere long. Through your favour, my dear son, I wish now to roam about the mountains, forests, rivers and lakes of diverse kinds under the pretext of hunting. After entrusting you with the burden of kingdom, I am desirous of enjoying covetable pleasures.

24. All these things which I had in my mind have been disclosed to you. If they are carried out, you will earn a great fame; if they are not done, you will fall into hell.

Dharmāṅgada said :

25. "I shall do all these things. Enjoy the pleasures that appeal to your mind. O dear father, I shall bear the heavy burden of kingdom with pleasure.

26. No other holy virtue except the execution of your behest is acceptable to me. A son who does not act according to the directives of his father incurs fall, though he may be performing holy rites.

27. Hence, I shall carry out your order : Here have I joined my palms (in reverential promise)." When these words were spoken, the king became delighted.

28. Learning again the availability of the game, Rukmāṅgada became desirous of going to the forest. Dharmāṅgada was delighted in his mind. He summoned his subjects and said :

29. "I have been commanded by my father to strive for your protection and welfare. My father's behests must be carried out in every respect by me who wish for the attainment of Dharma.

30. O subjects, a son has no other Dharma (holy duty) except the execution of the directives of his father. When I hold the rod of justice, even Yama cannot be the chastiser.

31. After realising this, the Garuḍa-emblemed Lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) should be remembered by you all. Janārdana is to be worshipped by you after dedicating the fruit thereof to the Brahman.

32. You must eschew the sense of my-ness, and the feeling of possessiveness). You must worship in the manner laid down for your caste. Thereby, you will gain everlasting worlds. There is no doubt about this.

33. O subjects, something in addition to the path of my father has been pointed out to you, since you will be endowed with the rite of dedicating the fruit to the Brahman. May all of you be adapts in perfect knowledge.

34. You must not take food on the day of Hari. This is the permanent path in accordance with the injunction of my father. A special additional thing has been mentioned to you by me viz. abidance in the Brahman.

35. This adherence to the Brahman is to be practised by persons who know the truth. It is rare to be achieved. There is no return therefrom. As for the observance of the fast, the stipulation is that it must be observed necessarily."

36. Dharmāṅgada had no rest or sleep by day or at night. He spent his day in consoling and cajolling his subjects again and again.

37. He used to tour everywhere, through his heroic valour. He weeded the earth of all the thorns (undesirable elements). The following loud proclamation used to be announced daily with the beating of drums placed on the heads of elephants :

38-41. "O people of the world, may Hari the Lord of the Devas, be contemplated while engaged in the threefold activities (?) Refrain from taking food on the Dvādaśī day; be free from the feeling of possessiveness. The Lord partakes of oblation offered to gods and manes. He alone is the Supreme person. The Lord of the worlds is to be remembered in the Sun, in the Kṛśākāśa (in the minutest of Ethereal space) and in the Visarga (subsidiary creation) by all men who are desirous of accomplishing virtue, love and wealth. Worship of Viṣṇu has been enjoined among the duties of one's

own caste. It is in the path of the good. Mādhava himself is the Enjoyer and (the object of enjoyment. He alone is the supreme Man (Puruṣottama). Employment of him alone in all holy rites is the proper thing.

42-43. Thus it proclaimed to the people by means of beating of drums with the rumbling sound of the cloud, O leading Brāhmaṇas. Thus the father of Dharmāṅgada realised the virtue of his son. O Brāhmaṇas, on realising that his son was equipped with the practical holy rites even more than himself, the delighted king said to his wife who stood there like another Lakṣmī.

44. "O fair-complexioned Sandhyāvalī, I am blessed. You too are blessed. To both of us is born as son white as the moon on the Earth.

45. Salvation has never been seen by anyone anywhere. Much about it has been heard by the ears. But the birth of our good son is the super-salvation that has been attained by us.

46. O fair lady, if the son is richly endowed with humility, good conduct and heroism, if he is valorous, certainly it is salvation obtained by the father in his very house.

47-48. Bliss is the form of the Brahman. Hundred such blisses are acquired by the father through his son, O woman of beautiful limbs, by his auspicious and holy rites.

49. O gentle lady, there is nothing on a par with this in the whole world consisting of mobile and immobile beings, if the good son takes over the burden of his father and lifts it himself.

50. So, I am delighted now. I shall go to the forest for hunting the deer and have some good sports. O woman of wide eyes, I am freed of my sins by affording protection to the people. I shall now freely move about.

CHAPTER TEN

The dialogue between Rukmāṅgada and Vāmadeva

Vasiṣṭha continued :

1-2. On hearing the words of her husband, the wide-eyed lady said : "O king, the truth has been spoken by you. O leading king, just as the sages say, there cannot be a greater happiness than that of a son. In this world it is equal to that of the greatest being named Viṣṇu.

3-4. The burden of responsibility arising out of the administration of the seven continents has been placed on the son by you. Abstaining from the violence to the deer, worship Janārdana by means of sacrifices; abandon desire for worldly pleasures; serve the celestial river; this is the proper and justifiable course of life to you but not the killing of the deer.

5. O king, resorting to worldly pleasures by fathers having grown up sons is like leaving the amorous marks with the nail on the breasts of an old woman.

6. O ruler of the Earth, worship Lord Hṛṣīkeśa (Viṣṇu) in the house. It is not proper on your part to kill innocent herds of deer.

7-8a. Non-violence has been glorified as the greatest virtue in the Purāṇas. One who maintains himself through violence pursues holy rites in vain. He who follows the path of violence does not gain anything, even if he follows the righteous path. O king, good men do not enjoy those things polluted and hurt by others.

8b. Violence to living beings is said to be of six types, O king.

9. The first man responsible for violence is the person who approves of it; the second one is the actual killer; the third one is the person who believes in it (who has faith in it) ; the fourth man (guilty) of violence is he who eats (the meat) ; the fifth man is the person who cooks and O king the sixth one is the person who is a participant in it. Learned men know the Dharma connected with violence is Adharma.

10. O king, a father who resorts to Dharma and who has become old in age, does not commit sins after entrusting the burden to the son.

11. Eschew the emotional feeling connected with the violence done to the deer. O king, hundreds of kings addicted to the vice of hunting deer have perished.

12-13. Hence I consider the act of striking down deer as wickedness. Excellent deep sympathy and mercy towards deer is seen in the righteous kings. It is with the earnest desire for your welfare that you are being prevented by me." To his wife who repeatedly urged thus, the king spoke these words :

14. O gentle lady, I do not wish to hurt or kill the deer. Under the pretext of hunting deer, I will wander in the forest weeding out thorns (undesirable element) with the bow kept ready in the hand.

15. May my son be among the people, O fairfaced lady, and may I be in the forest. The subjects must be protected from both the beasts of prey and the robbers, by the king.

16. O auspicious lady, the subjects must be protected by oneself or through one's son. The king who does not protect his subjects faces downfall, though he may be virtuous or religious.

17-20. O beloved lady, it is with the protection of people in view that I will be going to the forest. I am devoid of false emotions and feelings. After saying this to her, the king climbed on to an excellent horse like the sun on the peak of the Meru mountain. The horse was defectless, lustrous like the moon, and was as it were the ornament unto the Earth. It was like the celestial horse Uccaiḥśravas in respect of its beauty; it was like the Wind God in its speed. Paying respect to the Earth the king offered his right hand (?) which had given gifts of thousands and crores, which used to press and rub the breasts of beautiful ladies, which had the shape and appearance of the tender sprouts of the Aśoka tree and which bore the marks of a thunderbolt and goad.

21. The ruler of the Earth set off on his journey making the ground quake (beneath him). The excellent king passing many lands reached the forest.

22. Elephants, horses and chariots were shaken off due to the velocity of the horse. The foot soldiers fell unconscious on the surface of the Earth.

23. O king, after traversing hundred and eight Yojanas (one Yojana = 12 kms.) that king all at once reached the great Āśrama (hermitage) of the sages.

24-27. He entered the beautiful hermitage abounding in trees such as clusters of plantain trees, Aśoka, Bakula Mimusops Elengi), Punnāga (nut-meg), Sarala (pine trees), Mātuliṅga (citron trees), Kapittha (feronia elephantum), date palms, jack trees, coconut palms, palmyra, Ketakas, Sinduvāras, Sandalwoods, Tamālas (Xanthochymus epictorius), Pippalas, Campakas, Areca palms, Dāḍimas (pomegranates), thousands of embylic myrobalans, margoas trees, mango trees, Lodhras (a tree with red-white flowers) and many other trees full of ripe fruits. They bent down due to the weight of fruits and many birds perched on them.

28-29. Sweet smelling wind gently blew, wafting the fragrance of the flowers. Searching for the sages therein the king saw Vāmadeva[1], the most excellent Brāhmaṇa who had the lustre of fire and who was surrounded by many disciples. On seeing him the king got down from his horse and bowed to him with great respect.

30. The king was honoured and greeted with Arghya and other things by that sage. Sitting on the Kuśa grass seat he said in a delighted tone :-

31. "On seeing today the lotus-like feet of yours who are ever engrossed in deep meditation, my sins have been eliminated and fruition of my meritorious deeds has been achieved."

32. On hearing the words of king Rukmāṅgada, sage Vāmadeva rejoiced much. After enquiring about his health and welfare he said thus:

1. This is not the Vedic seer Vāmadeva but some other sage of the same name. A number of sages of this name are mentioned in the *Mbh.* (*Sabhā.* 7. 17, *Vana.* 192. 43 H, *Śānti.* 92-94) and *VR.* (I. 7. 4. II. 67. 3 etc.)

33. O highly blessed king, my hermitage visited by you, a highly meritorious devotee of Viṣṇu, has become the most sanctified on the surface of the Earth.

34. Which other king on the Earth can attain equality with you by whom Yama has been vanquished and the path leading to his abode has been broken.

35. O king, by compelling them to observe fast on the Dvādaśī day that is destructive of sins, the entire world has been led to the imperishable region of Vaikuṇṭha.

36. After controlling and restraining the subjects on the surface of the Earth soundly through the four splendid Upāyas (means of success, viz. Sāman, dāna, daṇḍa, bheda) they have been led to the region of the slayer of Madhu (i.e. of Viṣṇu) whether they abide by their duties or carry on the duties of others.

37-38. O king, you have come within our view and we had been desirous of seeing you. O king, even a Cāṇḍāla who is a devotee of Viṣṇu is superior to a Brāhmaṇa. Even a Brāhmaṇa devoid of devotion to Viṣṇu is inferior to a Cāṇḍāla. O king, rare indeed are those kings who are devoted to Viṣṇu on the surface of this Earth.

39-40. No king who is not a devotee of Viṣṇu can be the person who embellishes the glory and splendour of the Earth. If the king is not devoted to Hari but is devoted to other Deities, that king is like a woman who has abandoned her husband and is attached to her paramour. Certainly this kind of adverse behaviour affects that king.

41-43a. His behaviour will be contrary to virtue, wealth, love, intelligence and salvation.

Hence, the worship of Viṣṇu that is reasonably laid down has been performed by you. Hence, O king, you are blessed. We too are blessed since we have seen you.

Even as Vāmadeva spoke thus to him, the excellent king, naturally endowed with humility bowed down humbly and said :

43b-45. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I crave your forgiveness, O holy Lord, I am not like this. O Brāhmaṇa, I am not equal to even the dust of your feet. Never can even the Devas be

superior to Brāhmaṇas. A creature (i.e. the individual soul) becomes devoted to Mādhava through the Brāhmaṇas who are satisfied. If they are furious he becomes worthy of being hated (by Mādhava). This is the truth that has been stated by me.

46. Vāmadeva then asked him— Tell me. What shall I give you? O king, there is nothing that cannot be given to you who have come to my house as my guest now.

47. O king, if he gives anything on the earth, it must be that which is the most pleasing to him like the announcement through drums on the day of Viṣṇu which prevents people from taking food.

48. The king thereupon joined his palms in reverence and said to him— I have achieved everything by the sight of the pair of your feet.

49. O Brāhmaṇa, I have a doubt that has persisted for a long time. I am asking you the same since you are a leading Brāhmaṇa, who dispel all doubts.

50. By what meritorious deed has my wife become the most beautiful lady in the three worlds. She looks upon me as though I am superior to Manmatha.

51. Wherever the fair-complexioned gentle lady sets her foot, the earth reveals its great treasures.

52. Her limbs are devoid of the symptoms of old age. There are neither wrinkles nor greying hairs. O excellent sage, she shines always like the lustre of the autumnal moon.

53. O Brāhmaṇa, even without fire she prepares dishes of six tastes. Crores of men take their meal out of the little quantity of food that she cooks.

54. She is a chaste woman. She is by nature munificent; she causes happiness to all living beings. O Brāhmaṇa, disrespect is not expressed by her through words even when she is asleep.

55. My son who is born of her abides by my behest always. O excellent one among the leading Brāhmaṇa, on the surface of this earth, I am the only one who have a son in the sense of the term.

56. My son is a great devotee of his father. He surpasses me by means of his attributes. It is well known

on the surface of the Earth that I am only the ruler of a single continent.

57-58a. My son has surpassed me in this respect as he is the protector of all the seven continents. O leading Brāhmaṇa, for my sake, the princess well-known by the name of Vidyullekhā, had been brought by him after conquering many kings in the battlefield.

58b-59a. In the course of six months that Lord equipped with the wealth of beauty conquered those kings and made them stripped of their weapons.

59b-60. He went to the realm of damsels and conquered them in the battle. He brought eight excellent ladies from among them with force and presented them to me with repeated obeisances.

61. Urged by his mother, my son brought and handed over to me the divine and exquisite garments and jewels on the surface of the Earth.

62. Within a day he takes a round of many Yojanas over the Earth and returns to me by nightfall for the purpose of massaging my feet.

63. After massaging my feet, he stands at the threshold at midnight with his coat of mail on. He wakens and pulls up the attendants and servants who are overwhelmed by drowsiness.

64. That is why, O excellent sage, this physical body of mine is free from sickness and ailments. My happiness is immeasurable. My beloved in the house is fully subservient to me.

65. I have numerous horses and elephants. The foodgrains and riches I possess are infinite. All the people on the Earth obey my behests.

66. My present happiness is infinite. What is that meritorious action thanks to the power of which I possess it? Is it what has been performed in the course of this birth or the previous one?

67-68. O Brāhmaṇa, recount to me about my merit after pondering over it in your mind. There is no ailment in the body; the beloved wife is submissive; there is affluence in the

house, devotion to Hari and reverence to scholars as well as capacity to give liberally to the Brāhmaṇas. I consider this as originating from my merits.

CHAPTER ELEVAN

Rukmāṅgada meets Mohini

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. On hearing the words of the king, the excellent sage of sound and perfect knowledge thought for a moment. He understood its real cause and said thus :—

Vāmadeva said :

2. O king, formerly you were born of the Śūdra caste.[1] You were oppressed by poverty and harassed by a wicked wife.

3. You sustained yourself by serving others and receiving wages. O king, thus you continued to live for many years, distressed due to misery.

4-5. Thanks to your coming into contact with some Brāhmaṇas, once, your honour went on a pilgrimage to holy centres. O king, after going over all holy centres you reached the holy centre Mathurā and became interested in serving Brāhmaṇas. There, in the company of Brāhmaṇas, you took bath in the waters of the Yamunā.

6-8. At the holy centre named Viśrānti which is the most excellent of all holy centres, in the temple of the Divine

1. The motif of re-birth as an explanation of events in the present birth has been very popular in ancient and mediaeval Indian literature. The soul-denying Buddhists have extensively used it in Jātaka tales on the authority of the Buddha. Jainas used it widely in their Sanskrit-Prākrit-Apabhraṁśa narrative literature. Brahmanical Purāṇas are no exception. The NP. used it in Part-I Chs. 20, 23 with reference to *Viṣṇu Vratas*. Here too the same device is used to explain the exceptional luck of Rukmāṅgada.

Boar (Varāha), O king you heard the Puranic story being recounted. The holy rite of Aśūnya Sayana,* was being explained. As the Vrata is to be observed for four months on the 2nd tithi of the dark half of each month from Śrāvaṇa onwards, there are, for the completion of the Vrata four pāraṇās—one breaking of fast per month. Hence for its conclusion there are four Pāraṇās (breaking of the fasts). By its observance the Lord of the Devas, Hari, with the lustrous complexion like the cloud who is the Lord of the worlds and the consort of goddess Lakṣmī and the destroyer of all sins, is pleased.

9. Coming again to the temple that holy rite was performed by your honour. This observance called Aśūnya-śayana (non-vacant bed) is highly conducive to prosperity at home.

10-11a. If any one continues the life of a house-holder without observing this rite that destroys sins, O great king, his life is rendered fruitless like that of a barren woman. It appears to me that a happiness of this sort is very rare.

11b. O king, this holy rite must be undertaken on the Dvitīyā day** in the month of Śrāvaṇa. It is destructive of rebirths, death and old age.

12. O king, on this day the Lord of the Universe should be worshipped in the company of Lakṣmī with fruits, flowers, incense, sweet-smelling red unguents, charitable gifts of beds and clothes as well as by feeding Brāhmaṇas.

13. O king, everything of this Vrata has been performed by you though they were difficult. O king, this is the full fruition of the same holy rite called Aśūnya. Listen to the other sacred rites mentioned (or observed) by you in detail.

14. It is certain that these results will not have taken place, if the Lord of the Universe had been displeased. The Lord of the Devas had been worshipped by you in the previous birth through the observance of Aśunya rite.

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*(Formerly this was mentioned as *Aśoka Śayana, vide supra* I.111.13.

**In the region of the author of the NP a month is *Pūrṇimānta*. Hence the word 'dark half' is not probably used.

15. O leading king, in this birth, you are worshipping Hari by means of the holy rite of Dvādaśī. Surely you will attain the identity with Viṣṇu.

16. O king, thus your enquiry of auspicious nature has been explained by me regarding the origin of your affluence and leading to prosperity of your kinsmen.

17. O king, what else shall I give you or do for you ? By all means you are worthy of everything, as you are a devotee of Janārdana.

The king submitted :—

18. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I am eagerly desirous of visiting the Mandara mountain. With your permission , I wish to see the various miraculous things there.

19-20. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, after transferring the weighty burden of administering the kingdom that other kings find unbearable, to my son, I have become light(less burdened). I am free to roam about as I please. My duty will be looked after by my son. On hearing the words of the king, Vāmadeva spoke thus :

21. O prominent king, this is the highest duty of the son that he should always extricate his father from distress, out of affection.

22. He who carries out the order of his father to the best of his mental, verbal and physical capacity, shall derive the benefit of having a holy dip in Gaṅgā every day.

23. It is heard mentioned in the Vedic text that if the son goes to Gaṅgā for a holy dip against the expressed desire of his father, he will not attain the usual purity and sanctity.

24. O king, you are contented and blessed. Go as you please. Thanks to the favour of Hari, a meritorious son has been born in your family.

25. After this had been spoken by the sage, the glorious king mounted his horse and rode swiftly like the Wind God himself.

26-27a. Looking at and observing all the mountains, forests, rivers and the wonderful lakes and parks, the king ere long reached the mountain Mandara.

27b-28a. On his way he went round the white mountain 'Gandhamādana',[1] crossed the Mahāmeru and saw the northern Kurus.

28b-30. He reached the Mandara mountain refulgent with the splendour of a hundred suns and covered in gold all round. On being rubbed with the hands of Hari it had generated liquid gold. The whole region there was full of trees and decorated with many metals and minerals. With many fountains over it, it was embellished with many caves. It was full of ten thousand rivers and was washed by the auspicious waters of the river Gaṅgā.

31-32a. It was frequented by bevies of youthful maidens with rendezvous for serving their lovers.

The mountain was adorned with ripe, sweet smelling, potlike big fruits of trees which resembled the breasts of youthful damsels.

32b-33. The place was resonant with the buzzing sound of the bees and was reverberating with the cooing of cuckoos. On seeing the mountain resound with the cries of many living beings all round, the king entered the great mountain.

34-35. He desired to climb on to the top of the mountain. He was curious to find out the path whereby he could climb up. As he spied all round, he saw flocks of birds from the trees moving out attracted by the charming voice of an enchanting lady. He saw the birds flying quickly over the trees and he too went swiftly alongwith them.

36-37. The enchantingly sweet sound coming out of the mouth of that bewitching beauty entered his ears also. Fascinated by it, he left off his horse that had crossed the path as if in three steps. The whole path of the moun-

1. The location of Gandhamādana is disputed. M. Ali (*The Geography of the Purāṇas*, Fig. 7—the sketch of the Hindukush Range) shows it to be the Khwaja Mohammad Range while De identifies it with Rudra Himālayas—a part of the Kailāsa range. But in either case it is difficult to understand why a traveller from India (Vidiśā, in the case of King Rukmāṅgada) need cross or visit in passing Uttara Kuru (modern Kirghizia, Samarkand and Turkemenistan-*vide* D.P. Mishra's *Studies in Proto-history of India*, pp. 17:18 and the map of Uttarakuru facing p. 17) and Mahāmeru (the Pamirs) to reach Gandhamādana. It appears that the author of the NP. had some vague ideas of the locations of these places.

tain was spell-bound by the sweet song of the enchantress. Instantaneously, the king saw a lady stationed on the mountain. She had the lustre of molten gold. She was created like the staff of Kāma.

38-40. She was worshipping the Liṅga that rose high into the sky, for the welfare of the world. She was like the embodied form of the Earth and she was as it were the culmination of beauty like a Pārvatī, the daughter of the mountain Himālaya. She had the beauteous form of the seashore. Her body could be called the very mansion of sexual pleasure. She appeared to drag even the three-eyed lord stationed in the Linga, suddenly for the pleasure of the Lord. She was the personified form of the mental wish of a meritorious person. On seeing the beautiful form of Mohinī, the king was enamoured by the enchanting arrows of the god of love and the king fell down senselessly.

41. Regaining consciousness again as if his body was seized with a very high fever, he moved swiftly to her presence. The lady of beautiful eyes noted the approaching king with her side-glances.

42-44. She stopped singing and kept lute aside. She thought of her duties for the occasion. She drove off the flocks and herds of birds and animals. She covered her cheeks and arms with a fine cloth. She shook off the bees that were attracted by the fragrance of her breath. The gentle lady then went near the king after leaving off the worship-worthy Liṅga. After going near him, the enchanting lady of elegant movements and eyes like the petals of the lotus spoke these sweet words to Rukmāṅgada who had already been scorched by the arrows of Kāma— O king, get up, I am under your control.

45-47. Why do you waste this body of yours by falling in a swoon. You are a person who bear the burden of the Earth as though it was only a blade of grass. Why do you, on seeing my enchanting form, lose sense, like a weak cow sinking beneath the mire ? Be steady and firm. You are bold. You are a brave warrior. Why do you make yourself ridiculous ? You of elegant activities. O Lord of kings, if you have any desire to have extremely pleasant and favourable sexual intercourse with

me as a willing partner, after giving charitable gifts with due rites, you can do so. You can freely enjoy me like your own slave. I am an adept in the sexual act.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Stipulation of the conditions

Vasiṣṭha said :

1-3. When these splendid words were uttered by Mohinī, the leading king opened his eyes resembling a lotus. Deluded by the sight of Mohinī, he uttered the following words in a faltering tone "O young woman, many ladies with faces like the full moon have been seen and enjoyed by me. But I have never seen such a beautiful person like yours; such personal beauty as you have, fascinates the whole world.

4. O fair-faced lady, by your sheer sight I have been struck and hit by the arrows of Cupid. I have suddenly fallen on the Earth. O gentle lady, I prattled much on being fascinated by your brilliance.

5. O lady of beautiful thighs resembling the trunk of an elephant, be favourable to me. I shall grant you whatever you have in mind. My mind has been bound by your love and as such there is nothing in the three worlds that is not worth giving to you.

6-7. O lady of beautiful eyebrows, I am ready to give you this entire Earth whose limbs are bedecked in the mountains, whose garments are the oceans, whose eyes are the moon and the sun, whose bosom are the clouds (or is supple and firm), whose body is well set with the firmament (?), whose face is a gold coin, whose nature is beautiful, whose private parts are the nether worlds, whose hair is constituted by many trees and who has seven mountain lips (?). O beautiful lady I will give you the Earth alongwith my treasury, elephants, horses and cities accompanied by the ministers and therefore hearty.

8. O Mohinī of charming limbs, for a contact with you I will give even my soul; what then about wealth, gems etc ? Be favourable to me.

9. On hearing the words of the king Mohinī smiled, raised the king up and said in sweet voice.

10. O king, I do not wish to choose the Earth alongwith the mountains and oceans.. Whatever I say on a certain occasion must be carried out without hesitation.

11-12. I will resort to you. There is no doubt about it. Enter into this agreement with me.

The king said :

O gentle lady, I will enter into that agreement whereby you shall be satisfied. For want of the sexual contact with you my body has attained well nigh the tenth state (of a loveborn person).

Mohinī said :

13. Give unto me your right hand that has practised many holy rites, whereby I will be able to believe in your words, O king.

14. You are a king. You practise religious and holy rites regularly. You have won fame for truthfulness in the three worlds. You will never utter a lie on any occasion. Still this is a worldly convention of making you promise which has been followed by you.

15. When Mohinī said these words, the king who was overwhelmed with mental agony said with a delighted heart.

16. O beautiful lady, I have never uttered a lie since my birth. O fair-complexioned lady, even in the course of fun and sports I have never spoken a lie.

17. Or of what avail are these words uttered by me by way of convincing you in so many words ? Look that my right hand, marked by merits, is offered to you.

18. O beautiful woman, of lovely thighs, if I do not carry out your words, whatever merit has been accumulated by me ever since my birth shall become yours.

19. (In case I fail to carry out your words) my virtue and piety have been given in exchange to you. O lady become my wife. I have been forcibly and extremely perturbed and excited by your beauty.

20. I am a king by name Rukmāṅgada, the son of Ṛtadhvaja, born in the race of Ikṣvāku. Dharmāṅgada is my son.

21. O lady of charming eyes, under the pretext of hunting the deer, I have entered the forest. Then the pleasant hermitage of Vāmadeva was seen by me.

22. Something was mentioned by that sage. Thereafter I was bid adieu by him. Riding on my excellent horse I came here to see mount Mandara.

23. With my mind curious and enthusiastic I was roaming over the excellent mountain, when the sweet song emanating from your mouth reached my ears.

24. Attracted by that song, I have approached you. O lady of charming eyes, you have come within the range of my vision.

25. Thereafter, O gentle lady, I fell unconscious on the ground. Now I have regained consciousness, thanks to your nectarine words.

26. O enchantress of the worlds, I consider myself as a person born again. It behoves you to favour me by replying to me suitably.

27. On being requested by the king thus, Mohinī spoke in reply :—

O king, I am born of God Brahmā and have come here for your sake.

28. On hearing about your fame, I was overwhelmed by Cupid. I have forsaken all gods, the chief of whom was Indra, and come to the golden mountain of Mandara.

29. With my mind in concentration, I stayed here engaged in penance. I am worshipping God Śaṅkara, the Lord of the Devas, by offering (singing) songs unto him.

30. I consider presentation of music is the great favourite of the deities. O king, it is superior to all other Dānas (charitable gifts) and it is the bestower of endless salvation.

31-32. Paśupati (god Śiva) is satisfied with it and has immediately granted me the boon. You, the king of the Earth have been attained by me and this was what I had liked. O king you are loved by me and I am loved by you.

33. After saying thus to him, Mohinī caught hold of the hand of the king and quickly lifted him up even as he was lying on the ground like the thunderbolt of Indra.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Fascination of Mohinī

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. Lifting up the king, Mohinī spoke these words : O leading king, do not entertain any doubt. Know me to be a virgin without sins.

2-3a. O king, marry me in accordance with the injunctions laid down in the Gṛhyasūtras. If an unmarried virgin becomes pregnant, she delivers of a son of ill fame who will be despised by the people of all castes.

3b-4. In the Purāṇa, the wise know (i. e. say) that there are three types of Cāṇḍālas. One is the child born of an unmarried virgin; the second type is the progeny of Sagotra marriage (i.e. marriage between a man and a woman of the same Gotra or lineage). O leading king, the third type of Cāṇḍāla is the progeny of a Brāhmaṇa lady begot by a Śūdra.[1]

5-6a. For this reason, O king marry me a virgin." Thereafter, King Rukmāṅgada married that lady of tremulous

1. Cf *Veda-Vyāsa Smṛti* I. 9-10
Kumārī-Sambhavas tvekaḥ sagotrāyāṁ dvitīyakaḥ /
Brāhmaṇyāṁ śūdra-janitaś cāṇḍālas trividhaḥ smṛtaḥ //

side-glances, on that mountain itself, in accordance with the (Gṛhya-sūtra) injunctions. United with her the king said smilingly :

The king said :

6b-7a. O fair-faced lady, attainment of heaven is not as much conducive to happiness as winning you, O gentle lady, on this Mandara mountain. It does not please me so much as this meeting with you.

7b-8. O gentle lady, even though I am on this Earth I consider myself superior to Purandara (god Indra) since I have obtained O fair-eyed lady, you, the most beautiful lady in the three worlds as my wife. Hence I shall do whatever is favourable to you. Command me.

9. Tell me whether you wish to sport about here itself, O young lady, or in my palace or on the Malaya mountain or on the top of the Meru or in the Nandana park.

10. On hearing the words of the king that were indicative of his close attachment to her, Mohinī spoke these sweet words that increased the pleasure of the king :—

11. O king, in your capital city I shall be the victim of wounding side-glances of my co-wives. How can I, therefore, go over to your city ?

12. Let there not be, in the whole of the Earth, any woman who will be facing the misery originating from co-wives, throughout her life (till death).

13. O king, I have been obtained by you. From the bottom of my heart, I am subservient to you. It was after understanding that there would be the misery from co-wives that you have been wooed as my husband by me.

14. I will be able to reside on the excellent mountain that contains many miraculous features. But, O leading king the only thing is you cannot stay anywhere without Sandhyāvalī.

15. On being separated from her and her son, you will be definitely unhappy. Your sadness, O king, will increase my sorrow.

16. I shall establish myself soundly wherever you will derive sufficient happiness. O king, where you are happily

diverted, I shall also be happy, feeling that your place of residence is mount Mandara to me.

17. The wife must live in the place where her husband stays, even if it is not an affluent one. They say (i.e. wise people say) that, in the proximity of her husband that place is the veritable mountain Meru of gold.

18. O Lord, where you feel happy is surely my Meru, the place of my desire. Staying in the place of one's father after eschewing that of one's husband, is to be avoided.

19. A woman interested in staying permanently in the abode of her father sinks in darkness of hell. All her holy rites shall be fruitless and she shall be born as a sow.

20. I know such evil consequences. How, then can I stay on in the Mandara mountain ? I will go along with you. You are the Lord of my happiness and misery."

21. On hearing the words of Mohinī, the king was delighted in his mind. After embracing the beautiful, lady, he spoke these words : —

22. You will be above all my wives. O lady of beautiful thighs, do not have any doubt that you will have to face misery !

23. O lady of beautiful eyebrows, in my house you will be far superior to my own life. O lady of slender frame, come on. We shall proceed to the city for our mutual happiness.

24. O my beloved wife, staying there, enjoy freely all the worldly pleasures along with me.

25. It was eventually for his own destruction that Rukmāṅgada told her thus. Mohinī whose face was as white and fair as the moon, started from there producing the tinkling sound of her anklets. It seemed that she even dragged the beauty of the mountain too after her.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The salvation of Godhā, (the lizard)

Vasiṣṭha continued :

1. O king, both of them set off from the top of the mountain towards the surface of the Earth, surveying the various features of the mountain that captivated their mind.

2. Some of the regions resembled corals, some were white like silver, some had the blue lustre of sapphire and some regions had golden hue.

3. Some of them were crystal-coloured and others resembled the yellow orpiment. All the immobile beings were as if closely knit together.

4. After reaching the foot of the mountain (ground level), the king saw his excellent horse scrapping the ground with his powerful hoofs that resembled the thunderbolt.

5. As it scrapped and dug up the Earth with its sharp hoofs, a domestic lizard that had been beneath the ground came out.

6. While coming out, O king (?) it was crushed beneath the hoof of the horse. The kind-hearted king saw it being crushed.

7-8. Crying out to his beloved wife "Alas it is crushed !" he rushed to it. Then, with the tender leaf of a tree the king scrapped it from the hoof and threw it on a plot of grassy land. Seeing that it had become senseless he spoke to Mohinī :—

9. "O lady of beautiful limbs and lotus-like eyes ! Bring some water immediately so that I can sprinkle it on the lizard that has become unconscious due to its being crushed.

10. At the instance of her husband, she brought some cool water immediately. With that the king sprinkled the unconscious domestic lizard.

11-13. O king, Being sprinkled with cold water the lizard regained consciousness. In all cases of smiting blows, sprinkling with water is recommended. Or it is beneficial if it is immediately bandaged with a damp cloth. O king (?), after regaining consciousness the lizard spoke these words. Seeing the king in front of her, though it was distressed with (acute) pain

it (the lizard) spoke out slowly : "O mighty-armed Rukmāṅgada, listen to my story of life.

14. O Lord, I was the wife of a Brāhmaṇa, in the beautiful city of Śākala.[1] I was endowed with beauty and youth. But I was not liked much by him.

15. O king, that husband of mine did not hate anyone else, but he was always full of hatred towards me. He invariably spoke harsh words to me.

16. I was furious on account of this. In order to attain the power of Vaśī-karaṇa (attraction), O king I consulted those young women who had been abandoned by their husbands. (but who later on controlled them).

17. O king, I was informed by them—"Your husband will be subservient. We have been convinced (because once) we too had been abandoned and slighted by our husbands.

18. Indeed our husbands became meek and submissive through the medicines and potions given by an ascetic woman. O beautiful lady, you too ask her. She will give you the auspicious medicines.

19-20. You need not entertain any doubt. Your husband will be obedient like a slave. O king, at their instance I started from the place immediately. As I asked the people on the way, they pointed out her palace consisting of hundred columns and white-washed in a shining form.

21. After entering it, I saw the brilliant woman under the vow of celibacy. She had covered herself with a long cloth. She had the tawny coloured complexion like that of the dusk.

22. The refulgent lady wore long matted hairs; a number of attendants were waiting upon her; she was being fanned gently by them.

23. With a rosary of beads in her hand, she was repeating the Mantra that was Vaśyakara (conducive to attract and subdue people), that could cause excitement which could be verified (and hence was convincing.) She had the garland of happiness giving beads (?) round her neck).

1. *Śākala*—Capital of Madra deśa of Mahābhārata fame, and also of Indo-Greek King Menander alias Milinda of the Buddhist work *Milinda-Paññha*. Identified with mod. Sialkot in Pakistan.

24-25. Thereafter, I placed a soft lustrous ring of fine gold with superb brilliance at her feet and bowed to her. On seeing the ring placed at her feet she become delighted. Even before being asked, she had understood the disrespect to me by my husband.

26-27. Then, O king, I was advised by the ascetic lady when I bowed to her and stood by. "This medicinal powder alongwith this amulet brings all living beings under control. The powder must be given to your husband (for being taken in) and the amulet must be worn round the neck. Certainly the husband will become submissive. He will not go to any other beautiful woman.

28. Taking the medicinal powder and the amulet, I soon reached the house of my husband. At nightfall, the powder was mixed with milk and given to my husband.

29-30. The amulet was tied round the neck and I ceased to be anxious over anything. O excellent king, when my husband drank the potion with the medicinal powder, the consumptive disease took possession of him the same day. My husband became weaker and weaker day by day. Worms originating from cuts and putrefying wounds abounded in his private parts.

31-32. Within a few days, he became pale and dim like a lamp when the sun has risen. My husband became agitated and perturbed in his sense organs. Lamenting over his lot day and night he told me : O splendid lady, I am your slave. I seek refuge in you. Save me. I will never approach another woman.

33. O king, on hearing his lamentation I became much terrified. I informed the ascetic lady about everything and asked her. How shall my husband be happy ?

34. A second course of medicine was given by her for subduing the burning sensation. When the medicine was administered, my husband attained normal health instantaneously.

35. The burning sensation originating from the previous powder was nullified by that medicine. Thereafter, my husband became subservient to me. He abided by my words and advice.

36. In due course of time, I passed away and fell into the hell called Tāmrabhrāṣṭra (Copper frying pan) where I underwent torture for the period of fifteen Yugas.

37. Pieces as subtle and minute as gingelly seeds were cut off from my body and I was tortured: When a little of my sin remained still, I was born on the Earth.

38. The form of a lizard was given to me by Yama (the son of the Sun). Thus, O king, I have been here for the last ten thousand years.

39. O king, if any young maiden were to perform Vaśīkaraṇa rite to attract and control her husband, all her holy rites will be futile; she will be considered wicked and sinful in action and she will be burned and tortured in Tāmrabhrāṣṭraka (hell).

40. To a lady the husband is the Lord, he is the goal; he is the deity and he is the preceptor. If she were to perform the Vaśīkaraṇa rite in respect of him, how can she attain happiness?

41. She is born among hundreds of species of animals and creatures including the germs of leprosy. Hence, O king, the behest of the husband must always be carried out by a woman.

42. O king, unless you redeem me who have sought refuge in you, I shall have to be born again as a despicable creature with all my sins.

43-44. You can redeem me by giving me the merit acquired by you by observing the holy rite of Vijayā Dvādaśī[1] associated with the constellation (Naksatra) Śravaṇa at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Sarayū. This confluence is destructive of sins. The holy rite is conducive to the redemption of ghosts. It is the bestower of all mentally cherished desires.

45. On that day, O king, even if Hari is remembered in their own house by men, there is no doubt about it that he enables them to attain the merit accrued by visiting holy centres.

46. O king, whatever meritorious act like charitable gifts, oblations to fire, worship of gods, is performed on the day of Vijayā it has ever-lasting beneficial effect.

1. There are eight kinds of Dvādaśis, *Vijayā Dvādaśī* has *Śravaṇa* Nakṣatra *vide* Hemādri on Kāla, pp. 260-263, *Smṛti Kaustubha*, pp. 250-54.

47-49a Please do grant unto me that merit. If one observes fast on the Dvādaśī day and performs Pāraṇā on the Trayodaśī day, one acquires the benefit of observing fast for twelve years. O king, take pity on me and pass on that merit to me. On the Earth, you are the very physical manifestation of Dharma (virtue). You are the destroyer of the path of Yama. O save me. I am utterly miserable.

49b. On hearing the words of the lizard, Mohinī spoke these words :

50. O Lord, whether happiness or misery one experiences, it has the result of his own actions. Hence, what have you to do with this sinful creature who had been wicked to her own husband ?

51. O king, by means of amulets, medicinal powder and other things she gained control over her husband. O king, whatever is given to good men may be conducive to fame and heavenly pleasure.

52-53. What is rendered as a gift etc to the sinners causes downfall of both (the giver and the receiver). It falls off both the worlds. If milk mixed with sugar is given to a serpent, it will certainly increase its poison. Similar indeed is the help rendered to the sinners. Leave off this sinful creature. Let us go to the city.

54. If one delves into the births and dealings of others one's happiness perishes.

Rukmāṅgada said :

O daughter of Brahmā, how is it that these things were uttered by you ? O fair-faced lady, how can you say that this is not the conduct or way of life of good men?

55. O fair lady, those who are opposed to helping others are sinners. They do everything for their own happiness and harass others. They are opposed to rendering obligation to others.

56. The moon, sun, cloud, earth, fire, water, sandal, trees and good men are always for helping others.

57-58. O fair-faced lady, it is heard that there was a king named Hariścandra. Afraid of uttering a lie he experienced

various miseries one after the other. He had to stay in the house of a Cāṇḍāla. He had to sell his wife and son. Thanks to his steadfast adherence to truth, Śakra and other Devas became satisfied.

59. They asked Hariścandra[1] the king to choose any boon. Brahmā and other Devas were given this reply by that truthful king—If the Devas are satisfied it behoves them to grant this boon :

60-62. May this entire city alongwith its trees, reptiles, children, young men, old men, women, and quadrupeds go to heaven. Even if it had committed sins, I shall take over the entire sins of Ayodhyā and would like to go to hell. I do not wish to go to heaven alone after leaving people on the Earth. O great Devas, this is the truth, I utter.

63. On seeing his steadfastness, Indra and others permitted it. The entire city went to the heavenly world alongwith him.

64. The king is stationed in heaven in the company of his city. He moves about in the aerial chariot that goes wherever he pleases. He is being worshipped even by the immortal beings.

65. O gentle lady, on hearing that the Devas had been defeated by the Daityas, the gift of his own bones was made by Dadhīci for helping the Devas.

66. O fair lady, his own flesh was given to the hungry vulture by king Śibi formerly, for protecting a dove.

67. Formerly, there was a king over this earth named Jīmūtavāhana[2]. O fairfaced lady, his own life was given up by him for the sake of serpents.

1. Son of King Triśaṅku of the solar-race. His truthfulness and harassment by Viśvāmitra mentioned here is described in details in DB. VII Chs. 20.27. The readiness of Hariścandra to go to hell for the sins of others probably discloses the influence of Buddhist ideal expressed through Bodhisattvas.

2. The story of Jimūtavāhana's self-sacrifice probably formed a part of Guṇāḍhya's *Bṛhat-Kathā*, a *Paiśācī* work now lost forever. It is recorded in its Sanskrit version *Kathāsaritsāgara* (Śaśāṅkavatī Lambaka, Taraṅga 23). Harṣa selected him as the hero of his play *Nāgānanda* for propagating the Buddhist ideal of self-sacrifice.

68. Hence, O gentle lady, a king should be kind-hearted and sympathetic. O splendid lady, the cloud showers its waters equally on an unholy and pure spot.

69-70. The moon should delight even the Cāṇḍālas and the fallen persons through his rays. Hence, O fair lady, I shall uplift this distressed lizard by means of my own merits in the same way as Nahuṣa through his daughter's descendant (?).[1] Disregarding the enchantress thus, he spoke to the lizard.

71. My merit originating from the holy rite of Vijayā is given, (I repeat) is given unto you, by me. Be free from all sins and go to the world of Viṣṇu.

72-74. O king, on his uttering this, she eschewed the old and emaciated form of the lizard and became a beautiful lady bedecked in celestial ornaments. She took leave of the king and went away brightening the ten quarters and making (as if) a wonderful boundary line to the region of Viṣṇu. It is the place approachable only by Yogins. It is an excellent region brilliant like fire. It is the greatest Ātman. Hence she is also like the lamp of fire for the illumination of the universe and was transformed by the king.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The dialogue between the father (Rukmāṅgada) and the son (Dharmāṅgada)

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. After setting the lizard free from the sin, the delighted king laughingly said to Mohinī—May the horse be mounted instantaneously.

1. *Dauhitraiḥ*-lit. by daughter's sons. Nahuṣa after his fall from heaven, was redeemed by Yudhiṣṭhira (*Mbh. Vana*, Chs. 179-181). Yudhiṣṭhira was not exactly his daughter's son but the term is used here loosely to express a descendant.

2-3. Like Kṛṣṇa's horse (?) this can go ten thousand Yojanas in a moment. On hearing the words of the king, Mohinī, the ardently passionate lady, climbed on to the horse which was as swift as the wind, alongwith her husband. The lady of sweet smiles spoke these words to the king her husband.

4. O king, drive this horse towards your city. My desire to see the face of your son is intense.

5. O excellent king, I am at your disposal. You may go wherever you are inclined to go. On hearing the words of Mohinī, he started towards his city.

6-9. With great delight he observed the trees, the mountains, the rivers, the different kinds of forests, the animals of various sorts, villages, forts, lands, splendid cities, lakes of variegated nature and the charming plots of lands on the way. On seeing the hermitage of Vāmadeva soon, the king who was in a hurry, bowed down from the firmament itself. Again the king proceeded on his way on his horse that was as swift as the wind-god. Observing many lands fully endowed with riches and foodgrains.

10-12. The king reached Vidiśā (a city in Madhya Pradesh) that was under his control. His son Dharmāṅgada had already heard through his spies that the king, his father, was coming. With great delight he spoke these words to the vassal kings :—O excellent kings, this northern quarter is becoming brighter on being illuminated by his splendour and on being occupied by my father's horse. Hence, let us all go to greet the king face to face.

13. If the son does not come face to face with (i.e. does not personally go to receive) his father immediately on his arrival, he falls into the terrible hell and stays there as long as fourteen Indras reign.

14. The Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Purāṇas say that if the son goes ahead to receive his father face to face, (personally he derives the fruit of a Yajña for every step he takes).

15. Get up. I shall go to greet him lovingly surrounded by you all. He is my deity of deities.

16. When the king approved of his words saying "So be it," the prince accompanied by all of them went on foot for

a distance of a Krośa (3 km.) to greet his father personally face to face.

17. Appearing like the embodied form of Manmatha and accompanied by a thousand kings, he went a long distance and met the king on the way.

18. Meeting his father, he prostrated to him by falling at his feet on the ground affectionately. Alongwith the vassal kings, he bent his head down and made obeisance.

19-20. With great love the king observed his son falling at his feet immediately after arrival along with the vassal kings. The king got down from the horse. With his brawny arms he lifted up his son and warmly embraced him closely. Sniffing at his head the king then spoke to his son.

21. O son, I hope you are protecting your subjects. I also hope you are punishing the enemies. I presume you fill the treasury only with such amounts as are earned by justifiable means.

22. I hope, never failing maintenance amounts that are more than sufficient have been handed over to the Brāhmaṇas. I hope you practise attractive and pleasant manners, and that you do not speak harsh words.

23. I hope cows are now milked in the houses of Cāṇḍālas and sons carry out the behests of their fathers always.

24. I hope the daughter-in-law obeys the mother-in-law and her own husband. O son, I hope you never enter into verbal disputes with the Brāhmaṇas.

25. I hope the cows are not restrained in the land and are fed on different kinds of grass. I hope you scrutinise the weights and balances of foodgrains and other things.

26. O son, I hope you do not impose too much of a burden on the householder by means of taxes. I believe game of dice and over-addiction to liquor are not present in your land.

27. I hope there are people of different tastes and different opinions expressed in words in your city. I (further) hope the men do not maintain themselves on liberal gifts of others and do not wear old ragged clothes.

28. O son, I hope you personally survey the elephants and horses in your army and protect them. I hope you look after all your mothers without partiality.

29. O son, I hope men do not take food on the day of Viṣṇu (on the Ekādaśī day). I hope men are interested in performing Śrāddha when the moon is waning (on the New Moon day).

30. I hope you always eschew slumber in the latter halves of the nights. Slumber is the root of sins.

31. Slumber is the mother of poverty. It is destructive of prosperity and welfare. No king who is a slave unto slumber rules over the Earth for a long time.

32. Just as an unchaste woman destroys both the worlds of her husband so also slumber destroys both the worlds of the king.

When the father said all these things, the son spoke these words.

33. The son Dharmāṅgada bowed to the king again and again and said.

O dear father, all these things have been done by me. I shall again carry out your behests.

34. In all the three worlds those sons who carry out the instructions of their fathers, are blessed. O king, what is more sinful than not carrying out the directives of one's own father?

35. If the son disobeys his father and goes to Gaṅgā for his holy dip, he does not attain the benefit of the holy river. He who does not carry out his father's directives does not enjoy the fruits of pilgrimage to holy centres.

36. My body is subservient to you; my life is at your disposal.[1] My duty is subservient to you. You are my great deity.

37. A son cannot free himself from indebtedness to his father even by making a gift of the three worlds. O Lord, what then by means of physical strain, monetary gift and other things.

38-39. Even as his son surrounded by many kings said thus, Rukmāṅgada embraced the son and spoke these words : O

1. Henceforth every now and then *Dharmāṅgada* and *Sandhyāvalī* unknowingly and unintentionally hint the future tragedy—Dharmāṅgada's death at the hands of his father.

son, you have spoken the truth. You are the knower of virtue. There is no other greater deity for a son than his father. If the son disrespects the father, even the gods turn their faces from him.

40. Since you have conquered the Earth consisting of many continents and possessing many kings and since you protect that Earth, I have been held by you on your head.

41. This is the greatest happiness in the world, certainly this is the heavenly region on the surface of the Earth, that the son is superior to the father.

42. O son, I have been made contented by you who traverse the path of good qualities and who make all the kings observe holy rite on the auspicious day of Hari.

43. On hearing these words of his father, Dharmāṅgada, the son said :-

"O father, where did you go after depositing all the riches in me ?

44. At what place was this lady with the lustre of ten thousand suns attained by you? I think, after creating her Prajāpati (Brahmā) had become disgusted with the world and detached from it.

45. O king, in the whole of the three worlds there is no other woman with this form and beauty. I think she is born of the mountain or originated from the ocean.

46-47. Or she may be the Māyā (illusion) of the Daitya Maya, with the form of a young woman assumed by her. O Lord, indeed, Brahmā by whom she has been created is very clever. There is no slightest defect even to the extent of a hundred part of the tip of a hair. O Lord of the kings of the Earth, she is worthy of being the heroine of your house since she is as pure as gold. If I were to have a mother of such a type, which man is more meritorious than I ?"

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Anecdote of a chasle Lady

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. On hearing the words of Dharmāṅgada, Rukmāṅgada became delighted and said : It is true, O son, your new mother has been obtained by me on the Mandara mountain.

2. She is the daughter of Vedāśraya (support of the Vedas i.e. Brahmā). Formerly, O dear son, she had been performing a terrible penance on the divine mountain Mandara, with the determination of attaining me.

3. Some fifteen days before I started from here, riding on the horse I reached the Mandara, the most excellent of the mountains, containing many metals and minerals.

4. This damsel of comely appearance was seen by me seated on the top of the mountain, propitiating Maheśvara and engaged in singing.

5. Hit by the arrows of Anaṅga (the God of Love), I became unconscious and fell on the ground like the deer hit by a hunter.

6. Thereafter, I had been shaken (and revived into) consciousness)by this gentle lady of charming eyes; with some importunity I have been chosen as her husband.

7. I too have taken the pledge with offering of my right hand. This lady of large eyes has been made my wife by me on the top of the mountain.

8. Descending to the ground level (at that foot of the mountain), we got up on to the horse. Hurried (travelling therefrom) we have come to you within three days.

9.-11. On my way I had the pleasure of seeing mountains, different lands, lakes and rivers. O son, she is your mother. She would heighten your pleasure. Make obeisance to this lady of charming limbs as though to your own natural mother. On hearing the words of his father, the son, the suppressor of his enemies, bent down his head as far as the ground level and spoke these words :— O gentle lady, O dear mother, favour me. I am your son, servant and slave.

12-13. Accompanied by many kings I make obeisance to my mother. On seeing the son prostrating on the ground and thanks to the chivalry of her husband, the king, Mohinī got down from the horse, raised up the son and embraced him with her hands.

14-16a. Embraced by his mother, he saluted her once again. He adorned her with nice clothes and charming ornaments. Dharmāṅgada, the son with eyes like lotus, requested her to place her legs on his back and mount the horse. In the same manner, he made his father too mount the horse.

16b-17a. He himself walked on foot surrounded by the vassal kings. On looking at his step-mother he was delighted and had his hair standing on their ends. Praising himself in a resonant voice like the rumbling sound of the cloud he said.

17b-21a. Blessed is the son who has many mothers in the world, new, fresh and charming beloved wives of his father. If one has only one mother, one's father is miserable. If the father is miserable what happiness can the son have in the heart ? By saluting one mother the son has only the merit of bowing to one earth. By saluting many mothers I will have greater benefit day by day.

21b-22. Saying thus he entered the city surrounded by the vassal kings. He entered the beautiful city of Vaidiśa endowed with (i.e. abounding in) all prosperity. Seated on the horse alongwith Mohinī the king too followed instantaneously.

23. Then he entered the excellent mansion. On being greeted and honoured by the people, the king got down from the horse and spoke these words to Mohinī.

24. O charming one, go to the house of Dharmāṅgada our son. In accordance with his attributes, he will render service to you as befitting an elderly person.

25. Neither a chaperon nor a servant can render such a willing service ! On being thus advised by her husband, she started for the mansion of their son.

26-27. She was seen entering the mansion by Dharmāṅgada, at the instance of her husband's words. He thereupon left the vassal kings saying—"All of you stay here. At the

behest of my father, I shall render personal service unto her. On saying this he entered the mansion and grasped the hands of his step-mother. After walking fifteen steps, they reached the cot. He made Mohinī sit there.

28-29. It was made of gold with silk cloth spread over. It was soft and firm. A soft bed-sheet was spread over it. It was bedecked in gems and jewels. Many jewelled lamps having the refulgence of the sun, were fitted on to it. Thereafter, the prince who had virtue as his ornament (i.e. Dharmāṅgada) offered water for washing the feet of Mohinī.

30-31. The prince considered her even elderly to Sandhyāvalī. His mind did not have any ignoble feelings towards Mohinī. Though he was beautiful and graceful and she a charming lady with plump and stout thighs, buttocks and breasts, he considered her a lady ten thousand years old and himself a boy of three years.

32. After washing her feet, he applied (sprinkled) that water on his head. With the head bent down in humility he said : Mother, I am meritorious (with you as my mother).

33. After saying this, he dispelled her fatigue by his own efforts and by those of men and women (servants). With great joy he placed all means of pleasures at her disposal.

34-35a. At the time of the churning of the milk ocean two earrings were produced. They used to emit nectarine juice. These were acquired by Dharmamurti.[1] After conquering Dānavas in the Pātāla (nether worlds). Vṛṣāṅgada (i.e. Dharmāṅgada) himself put these in the ears of Mohinī.

35b-36a. A necklace of a thousand and eight auspicious white pearls each like the fruit of the embylic myrobalan was put on the bosom of the gentle lady.

36b-37. Then the prince offered her a subsidiary light necklace of gold coins of a hundred Palas inset with ten thousand diamonds to his mothers. He gave her twice eight

1. VV. 34-46 contain reference to the history of some rare ornaments acquired by Dharmāṅgada and gifted to Mohinī. I could not trace it in other purāṇas.

bangles (i.e. sixteen) studded with diamonds for both the hands.

38-43a. They were made by men who knew their value. For each of the hands, a crore of gold coins was spent. The prince gave invaluable armlets and anklets to the beloved wife of his father as ornament. They had the refulgence of the sun. The girdle of fiery refulgence that Śarvāṇī (Pārvatī) had, fell off as she was extremely terrified in the course of the fight called Tārakāmaya (pertaining to the demon Tāraka) while Kālanemi was ruling over the kingdom. It then fell into Mūlapācana (original fire). Thereafter, it was picked up by the demon Maya who wielded his power of illusion over the whole world. Dharmāṅgada had killed that Daitya on Mount Malaya although he had been surrounded by a crore of Daityas. At the instance of his father, he had killed him in the course of a terrible war that lasted for a year (on the mountain Malaya). He got the girdle that the beloved of the king of the Daityas had on her person. The king gave that to his father's beloved great queen with his hair standing on their ends out of delight.

43b-46. Formerly, Hiraṇyakaśipu's queen who was an outstanding beauty in the world, had a crest jewel that had the refulgence of lightning. She immolated herself in her husband's funeral pyre. Before dying, the extremely distressed lady had cast her crest-jewel into the sea. The sea collected the excellent jewel and presented it to Dharmāṅgada on being delighted at his prowess. The delighted prince now gave that jewel which had the brilliance of a crore of suns to his step-mother.

47. He gave Mohinī two auspicious clothes sanctified in fire and two charming bodices, a thousand crores in value.

48-49. Dharmāṅgada then gave the gentle lady Mohinī, the divine garland and the sweet-smelling divine unguent that was very rare and had been acquired from the accomplished hands of the preceptor of all the Devas by the heroic Dharmāṅgada in the course of his conquest of all the continents. He gave her the unguent that enhanced her love.

50. After embellishing her with great devotion, he fed

her with meals consisting of dishes of six tastes and brought by his natural mother herself

51. Even before this, he had addressed his natural mother and enlightened her by means of many words. There is no doubt about this that the behest of the king must be carried out by me as well as by you.

52-53a. O gentle lady, she who is the king's beloved is a highly respectable woman for us. The wife who acts wickedly against the lady-love of the king, her husband, falls into hell and stays there till fourteen Indras reign.

53b-54. She who nurses feelings of enmity against the lady-love of her husband and tries to separate them in their love, is fried in Tāmrabhrāṣṭa hell (the frying pan made of copper.) Everything that is conducive to the happiness of her husband, should be done by the wife.

55. O fair-complexioned lady, she must view her as she views her husband. She must do what is favourable and beneficent to the lady-love of her husband.

56a. Even if she (the husband's lady-love) happens to be of a lower caste, the wife who renders service to her, goes to heaven.

56b. Afterwards she will occupy the same loving place in the mind of her husband.

57. After acceding to the wish of her husband she derives all worldly pleasures. By eschewing the feelings of malice and jealousy, she attains the region of the Lord of every one.

58. On seeing a cowife to be the most beloved of her husband, if a woman renders service to her, she will attain an eternal place in heaven.

59-60. There was a very wicked man of the Śūdra caste. He had abandoned all holy rites.[1] He had a wife and also a

1. VV. 59-89 give an illustration of a chaste Śūdra lady who served her depraved husband and his keep who when he was affected by fistula left him penniless. This chaste lady borrowed money from father, gave medical treatment to him, personally nursed his wound. When he died, she immolated herself on his funeral pyre and washed off her husband's sins by her merits; both of them went to heaven.

beloved lady, a prostitute whom he kept in his house. The wife who wanted to please her husband served him as well as the prostitute. She washed the feet of both of them. She partook only of the leavings of the food of both of them.

61. Though she was prevented from doing this by the prostitute, she continued her activities of service. She ever remained in the path of the good. She was engaged in what was beneficent for both of them; while both of them lay on the cot, she used to lie down beneath on the bare ground.

62. Thus she served her husband alongwith the prostitute for a long time, wading through the ocean of misery.

63-64. Without caring for the advice of the chaste wife the man committed many blunders in the matter of his diet etc. He drank the milk of the buffalo alongwith radish. The foolish fellow ate the winnowings (of corn) mixed with oil. As a result of this he had a terrible fistula in the anus.

65-66a. He was extremely distressed by day and night. The prostitute took everything valuable that the house contained and went over to another young man. The lustful woman gave him all the wealth.

66b-67. Now the Śūdra man became much ashamed. With distress evident in his face, he lamented and spoke thus to his wife : O gentle lady, save me though I had been very cruel to you and much attached to a prostitute.

68. O beautiful lady, the sinner that I am, I have never done a good thing to you. O lady of slender waist, for many years I sported about alongwith the prostitute.

69. The sinful haughty man who does not console his wife who bows down to him, attains all inauspicious things in the course of fifteen rebirths.

70. O gentle lady, since I had disrespected you, I shall attain the despicable birth in the house of a Cāṇḍāla. But your mind has not been turbid despite insults.

71. On hearing these words of her husband, the wife spoke to the husband. It is the sins committed in the previous births that yield miseries. A learned man who bears them

with fortitude, should be known as the most excellent among men.

72. I had been sinful in the previous births. Now I experienced the fruits thereof in this birth. Hence, I have neither sorrow nor misery.

73. By saying this she consoled and cautioned her husband. The fair-complexioned lady brought some money from her father and other kinsmen.

74-75. The chaste lady considered her husband a Viṣṇu, the resident of the milk ocean. She cleaned his anus and other private parts assiduously by day as well as by night, by means of turmeric juice and water. She scraped the germs and worms in the body of her husband, by means of her nail.

76. She fanned him with peacock feathers. O gentle lady, the fair-faced lady slept neither during the day nor at night.

77-78. Distressed by the misery of her husband, she felt that the whole universe was blazing (?). She said—If there is goddess of earth, if there are manes, if there are deities, may they make my husband free from ailments. May he be free from sins. I shall give unto Goddess Caṇḍikā blood mixed with flesh.

79. I shall offer the flesh of goats, buffaloes and even human beings for the well being of my husband. With great respect I shall observe ten fasts.

80. I shall place my body on a bed of sharp-pointed thorns. I shall not take sweet things. I shall not take ghee.

81. I shall remain for days together without anointing the body externally with oil. May my husband live for a hundred years without any ailment.

82-83a. As day followed day, she blurted out like this in her agony. Within a short while, all the three humours in his system were upset. With great effort she gave her husband the three astringent medicines (black and long pepper and dry ginger).

83b-84. Once due to chilliness the man was quaking and shivering. His jaws suddenly came together and the finger of the wife was bitten off by the teeth coming together. O

queen of the Lord of men, the piece of finger remained within the rigid mouth.

85. She sold off her bangle and brought a great deal of fuel. She prepared the funeral pyre. After placing her dead husband on it, she poured ghee over the pyre (fuel).

86-89. She too climbed on the funeral pyre joining her face to his face, her heart near his heart and O gentle lady, her buttocks near his buttocks. With her foot she dragged the fire. The auspicious lady of charming limbs set fire to the ailing body of the husband alongwith her body. As the fire blazed brightly, she cast off her body and went to the world of the Devas taking her husband with her after annihilating many of his sins by means of her holy rites very difficult to be performed.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The statement of Mohini

The son (Dharmāṅgada) said :

1. Hence, O Mother, eschew jealousy and feed Mohinī. A holy rite (dharma) like this cannot be attained in the three worlds.

2-3. The wife who, with her own hands, feeds the beloved lady love of her husband, the co-wife who gives a little quantity of cooked rice to the co-wife shall, O gentle lady, O dear mother, become immortal—So says god Brahmā. O Mistress (of the Mansion) be favourable to me carry out what has been related by me.

4. O fair-complexioned lady, what is conducive to the happiness of my dear father must be performed by both of us. The sins shall be exterminated perfectly. Similarly, the attainment of heaven shall be everlasting.

5-6. On hearing the words of her son then, the queen Sandhyāvalī invited* her son and embraced him again and again. She sniffed at his head and spoke these words : "O son, I shall carry out your words pregnant with dharma (virtues).

7. Eschewing jealousy and false prestige I shall feed Mohinī. I have the pleasure of being the mother of a hundred sons, O son, with you as my only son.

8. It was after observing many holy rites and restraints causing bodily exertion, that you were born. Since I observed the holiest of holy rites, the 'king' of holy rites, you were attained by me as my son.

9. In this world there is no other holy rite that is seen to be yielding benefits like this. This gives convincing proofs immediately. This is destructive of great sins.

10. Of what avail is it if many sons who cause sorrow and distress are born ? It is better to have one son, as the main prop of the family, where the entire family takes comfortable rest.

11. On attaining you as one stationed in my womb, I have reached the top of the three worlds (I am above the three worlds). O sinless one, blessed are those pains of labour whereby you are born as my son.

12. You are the son who delight both father and mother, you are the heroic son who have become the Lord of seven continents; you have carried out the words of your father.

13-15. Poets (Learned Philosophers) call only that person real son—the person who delights both the father and the mother. Others are only 'so-called' sons.

After saying these words, queen Sandhyāvalī just glanced at the pots and utensils for the purpose of a meal consisting of dishes of all the six tastes. By her very glance the utensils were full of dishes that would be pleasantly warm and that would be as tasty as Nectar, which she wished that Mohinī should partake of.

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*A better emendation : *abhinandya* "praised", 'approved of' in stead of *abhi-mantrya* in the text.

16. She took a golden ladle studded with jewels. Smiling sweetly, she served food to Mohinī without any perturbation.

17. She slowly ate the desired and well cooked food in a polished excellent vessel, all round which beverages and edible dishes had been placed.

18-19. The gentle lady, the daughter of Brahmā, sat on an auspicious golden seat and took food that was comparable to nectar. While taking food, the fair lady was fanned with a fan of peacock feathers held by Dharmāṅgada, in accompaniment of music.

20-21. After washing with cool water (her hands and mouth gurgling four times), she accepted the fragrant Tāmbūla (chewing betel leaves) given by her (step)-son. The fair-complexioned lady took it with her hand over which excellent sandal paste had been applied. Then O king, she laughed and said slowly to Sandhyāvalī.

22. "O gentle lady, are you the mother of king Vṛṣāṅgada (i.e. Dharmāṅgada) ? O auspicious lady, due to perspiring tiredness you cauld not be recognised by me."

23. O king, while the daughter of Brahmā was speaking thus to Sandhyāvali, the son of the king bowed to her and spoke these words.

24. "I had been held in her belly (womb) by this gentle lady for three years. I flourished thanks to the favour of your husband.

25. O Beautiful lady, I have hundreds of mothers. But much milk flowing out from the breasts of this lady out of (motherly) affection has been drunk by me.

26. That severe pain which more or less amounts to old age has been endured by her. It was after giving birth to me that she had become disjointed in her limbs.

27. A son has nothing in possession in all the three worlds by giving which he can be free from the indebtedness to his mother. O lady of sweet limbs, this is the truth that has been pronounced by me.

28. I am the most blessed one in the world. No man is superior to me. Everyday I sit on the lap of groups of mothers.

29. If anywhere the son does not sit on the lap of his mother, he does not become aware of the happiness of motherly affection like a virgin who remains unaware of the love of a husband.

30. A son who has climbed on to the lap of his mother may become very proud, and wish to snatch the necklace from the excellent body of his mother, with his hand.

31. Maternal milk is so powerful that even if any body is bereft of his father, he desires to seize the whole world on being duly reared and brought up by his mother.

32-33. (?) My love toward this lady is due to the contact of the belly. My love towards the other mothers is due to the contact of the lap. If it be true that I do not cherish any difference (or partiality) between this (mother) and (my) other mothers may my father live for hundred years, thanks to that truth." When her (step) son said thus Mohini was wonder-struck.

34-37. "Ruthless as I am by nature, how can I strike him who is so humble and sinless. This would have been proper in the house of a tinner (?) If a boy is regularly rendering service to his father, there is no one on Earth on a par with him. It is for perpetrating a despicable act with regard to such a boy so superb in virtue (as compared with others) and by nature so virtuous and inclined to religion that I have become a step-mother unto him, in this world." After reflecting like this in various ways, Mohinī the most beautiful woman in the world spoke to her step-son : "Fetch my husband quickly. Without him I cannot stay even for a Muhūrta (i.e. 48 minutes).

38-39. Then, O king (?), he hastened to his father and bowed to him. He said—O dear father, the younger mother desires to see you immediately. Be favourably disposed towards her. May Brahmā's daughter be greeted and honoured" At the instance of the son the king got ready to go instantaneously.

40-42a. With pleasure evident in his face. the king entered the apartment of Sandhyāvalī and saw Mohinī the enchanting lady having the luster of molted gold lying on the bed and being served slowly by his beloved Sandhyāvalī eschewing

at the advice of her son the natural anger and jealousy felt towards a co-wife.

42b-43. On seeing Rukmāṅgada come, the beautiful lady on the bed, Mohinī, delightedly said to the king who had a great deal of chivalry—" O husband, be pleased to sit here on the cot spread with soft cotton (cloth).

44. O king, the affairs of the kingdom have been looked after by you for a long time and in their entirety. Still your desire for the administration of kingdom does not cease.

45. O king, I consider you the most sinful one on the surface of the Earth since you yourself look after the royal glory (affairs of the state) although you have been aware that your son is efficient.

46-47a. Hence, there is no one more miserable than you in all the worlds. O king, the time of those fathers who have good sons passes happily and that of the experiencers of the fruits of sins, whose mind is drawn towards worldly pleasures passes in misery.

47b. All the Prakṛtis (the elements of the statecraft) (or subjects), O king, are fond of you. This is the result of your full meritoriousness.

48. When Dharmāṅgada is protecting this kingdom and the subjects, why should you also see to it now after eschewing the pleasure of your beloved wife like a weak niggardly fellow.

49. If you are going to look after the kingdom, of what use am I to you ? In vain have I been brought from the head Mandara, the churning rod of the ocean of milk (?)

50a. Just as flesh is to birds I shall be turning food to faeces (?)

50b-52a. If any foolish person, too much interested in carrying out his duties, does not take to his wife endowed with blooming youth, whence can he expect to have the beloved ? If the wife is not enjoyed, she may go away; if the wealth is not given in charity, it may go (disappear); if the kingdom is not protected well it may go (to ruins); if the learning is not recited and revised, it may (be forgotten and vanished).

52b-54a. Learning is not acquired by idle persons; a wife is not acquired by persons always observing holy vows; good

fortune is not obtained without regular and assiduous performance (of good deeds); glory is not attained by persons who are not devotees, an industrious man does not get happiness; a person who has no wife cannot obtain children, an impure person does not attain virtue (dharma) and a Brāhmaṇa of unpleasant words does not attain wealth.

54b-56. Without asking no one understands things; without walking (i.e. moving forward) no one reaches destination; a person who is not a disciple does not understand the holy rite; a wakeful person knows no fear. Why should you, O king, leave me alone in the splendid house of Dharmāṅgada and look after the affairs of your kingdom, O lord, when your son is competent (to do it himself)?

57. When the daughter of Brahmā, who was fond of sexual intercourse and who had large charming eyes spoke thus, the king who was standing by the side of his son became ashamed. He spoke thus to his beloved.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Honouring the Mothers

The king said :

1-3. "O timid lady, I did not assume authority to take up the duties of the king. Since I was very tired, I was overpowered by a pleasing slumber. I told Dharmāṅgada thus : "Take Mohinī to your apartment that is bedecked in all jewels, that could be ventilated or controlled (and protected from) wind (at will) and that is pleasing in all the seasons. O son of beautiful eyes resembling the petals of a lotus, worship her duly. She is my most beloved wife."

4. After commanding my son thus, I went to sleep after reaching the bed with great difficulty like a man of ill-luck attaining wealth.

5. The moment I woke up I have hastened to your presence at once. O gentle lady, there is no doubt about this that I shall carry out whatever you say."

Mohinī said :

6. O leading king, appease these wives of yours who are very miserable. They are dejected by your marrying me. They have lost all hopes of satisfying their passionate desire for worldly pleasures.

7-8. O king, O Lord of the subjects, If any one were to strike and pierce into the heads of the Senior wives of comely appearance, the wedge known as the younger wife, he will not have salvation nor will she attain the final beatitude. What peace can I have when I have been burnt in the scalding tears of chaste women ?

9. O king, the gentle and chaste ladies may reduce even my procreator (Brahmā) to ashes. What then about an ordinary persons like you or me ?

10. O king, there is no woman like Sandhyāvalī in all the three worlds. With all her limbs bound by love towards you, she had been feeding me with food-stuffs having all the six tastes.

11-12. Thanks to the honour and weightage given to you, she spoke pleasing and coaxing words to me. There are hundreds of women like these in your abode and O king, I am not even equal to the dust of their feet."

On hearing these words of Mohinī, the king became ashamed.

13. The king was then standing near the eldest wife who was accompanied by her son. The son who was a person understanding the inner feelings of other persons, knew that the king had gone through all the ten states of love-lorn persons.

14. He understood that his father was overwhelmed by passionate love and was fascinated by Mohinī. He called together all the mothers. (i.e. the queens of Rukmāṅgada) beginning with Sandhyāvalī.

15. With palms joined in reverence, he spoke to them these pleasing words—Mohinī, the daughter of Brahmā and the newly wedded wife (of my father) is my (step) mother.

16. O gentle ladies, she yearns for a secret meeting with the king for dalliance with him. Hence delightfully approve of it.

The Mothers said :

17. O son, who will approve of and encourage the swallowing of oneself by a serpent? O foremost one among embodied beings, who will place fire over himself and kindle it ?

18. Who will swallow the terrible poison ? Who will cut off one's own head ? Who will tie a terrible stone round one's neck and try to cross the sea ?

19. Who will enter the jaws of leopards. Who will try to pluck hairs from the manes of a fierce lion ? Who will sit over the sharp edge of a sword that dazzles in the sky.

20. Which lady will approve of the dalliance of her co-wife with her husband (?) One would rather give everything that one has than entertain thoughts about this in the mind.

21. Which woman will see with her own eyes her husband respected (and openly loved) by another woman ? It would be by far the better that her head is cut off with an excellent sharp-edged sword.

22. Who is that lady, if at all any one is like that anywhere, who will be able to bear that her husband whom she considers her own vital breath is pressing and caressing the breasts of another lady ?

23-25a. Much less who will be able to see it with her own eyes. This is the most miserable of all miseries bringing in endless grief if a woman is compelled to see with her own eyes her husband enamoured of another woman. O son, it is even better if all your mothers die simultaneously; but the king, our husband, should not be seen united with Mohinī.

Dharmāṅgada said :

25b-26a. O ladies of splendid faces, If you are not prepared to accord happiness to my father, I will mix poison and drink it. After I die you can have the happiness.

26b-27a. If any lady were to carry out anything mentally, verbally or physically causing misery to my father, she is my

enemy, she deserves to be killed by me even if she were Sandhyāvalī.

27b-28a. That gentle lady Mohinī is superior to all. She is the most beloved of my father. The maiden has come from her abode on the mountain Mandara for the purpose of dalliance.

28b-29. On hearing these words of their step-son, the mother-queens trembled with grief In a faltering tone they spoke wishing for the benefit of their step-son.

"Your statement must of necessity be executed. It is reasonable by all means.

30-32. But your father may approach Mohinī after giving gifts duly to his other wives. If any husband wishes to marry a second or a subsequent wife, he must give the eldest wife twice the amount (of dowry received from her ?) Otherwise he is a debtor. If the husband takes the permission of the eldest wife and marries another lady, he must give what the eldest wife desires and demands—so opine the persons who know the traditional customs and manners. The excellent man must perform Iṣṭāpūrta (i.e. sacrifices, digging of wells and charitable rites) in the company of the eldest wife.

33a. This is the Dharma (religious practice). Otherrwise it will be injustice and there will be complete destruction of Dharma as well.

33b-34. On hearing the words of the mothers the son (i.e. Dharmāṅgada) gave with a delightful heart each of them many presents. The prince gave them more than a crore each. He gave away a thousand cities and a thousand villages to them as well.

35. To each of them he gave eight chariots fitted with garlands of gold and yoked to four female mules.

36-37. He gave them ten thousand garments the price of each of which was more than a hundred coins. To each of his mothers the prince gave a hundred thousand pure gold pieces of everlasting (lustre) excavated from Mount Meru. The son of the king gave each of them more than a hundred men servants and women slaves.

38. To each of them he gave ten thousand cows, each of which yielded a big potfull of milk (at a time). He gave them

a thousand good poles to which the yokes are to be fixed, severally.

39. The son of the king gave each of them ten kinds of grains. Laughingly he gave a hundred thousand gardens.

40. He gave ten thousand pots of ghee and oil separately. To each of them he offered inumerable goats and ewes.

41. The highly devoted son presented them (the queen-mothers) thousands of gold ornaments studded with diamonds (and precious stones).

42. He gave them necklaces made of brilliant pearls of the size of embylic myrobalan fruits. He gave them five and seven (a dozen) bangles each.

43. Sandhyāvalī was already wearing on her person two hundred and fifty pearls resembling the moon.

44. The son presented each of them two necklaces that captivated the mind. He gave them Prastha measures of Saffron, sandal paste and camphor.

45-46. The son gave them huge quantity of musk. Desirous of the happiness of his father he impartially distributed to them different kinds of vessels, water pots, ghee pots, milk pots, and pots for different kinds of beverages.

47. The prince gave them gold plates, pots and vessels one thousand and fourteen hundred in number (?)

48. To each of them he gave three hundred to five hundred she-elephants of great speed with muscular and fleshy shoulders.

49. He gave them twenty she-camels each and hundred palanquins with brawny men with excellent dress (uniform).

50-51. To the mothers he gave seventy horses of happy pleasing trot. After giving thus to them much wealth, the blessed prince who had the affluence and brilliance of Kubera circumambulated them. With palms joined in reverence he addressed these words.

52-53. I bow down to you with my head bent low. It is my importunity to you all that all of you should say thus to my father.— O king, enjoy Mohinī freely. We have no trace of malice towards you nor should you be malicious towards us. Sport with Mohinī the good natured daughter of Brahmā, with hundreds of secret pleasures from her.

54. On hearing the statement of the son, all of them were thrilled with delight. They spoke to their husband the king. "Sport with the daughter of the self-born deity for a long time like the leading scion of the family of Raghu, (Rāma) with the daughter of the king of Videha (i.e. Sītā).

55. There is no doubt about it that the daughter of Brahmā cannot be a cause of poignant grief to us because of her sexual connection with you. Know that these words are uttered by us without any heart-burning misery. Thanks to the brilliance of your son.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The love-making of Mohini

Vasiṣṭha continued :

1. The king who was passionately fond of his lady-love, on being permitted by his wives, derived incomparable delight. He spoke to Dharmāṅgada thus :—

2. "O son, protect this Earth consisting of seven island-continents after slaying the wicked at the outset. Be ever vigilant and alert and active.

3. Always make use of the best opportunites. Be a supervisor of good conduct. Be always conscious of everything and alert, be favourable to good business transactions.

4. Be moving continuously; always be interested in charitable gifts; always eschew crookedness, be always engaged in the disciplined life of the good.

5. O son, listen to another thing which should be pursued by you now. Lack of trust and confidence in everything and everyone is recommended in the case of kings.

6. O popularly loved one, (you must possess) the accurate knowledge of the treasure and of the (assets of the) people.

You should elicit money (taxation) like the (absorption of) flowery juice by a bee gathering honey (from flowers).

7. Through you as my son, I feel that youth has been regained by me.

8. After delightfully entrusting you with the burden of the earth with its seven oceans and continents and having obtained this moon-faced wife of excellent and rare beauty and seductive charms, I shall enjoy myself in dalliance.

9. In the human world, a father overcome with wrinkles, shaking old teeth and white greying hairs becomes a cause of shame and (derisive laughter) if he is desirous of sexual intercourse, when the son has attained muturity and is competent.

10. Though aged, I am not weak and infirm; I am flourishing in happiness, I desire this fair lady the most beautiful in the world, who for my sake has forsaken even the Devas; this lady of sweet and charming eyes, who has been smitten by the arrows of Cupid, has come to me (of her own accord).

11. I will engage myself at will in sexual dalliance with this lady of the lustre of molten gold, my mind shall then be full (thanks to the realisation of my cherished desires). After hiding myself on the banks of rivers of divine beauty as well as sylvan fountains and rivulets (I shall enjoy myself with this lady).

12. This lady is dearer to me than my life. She is the sole lady of heaven who can easily be held by me. For her sake even the Devas lost their sense like groups of kings over Ramā (goddess Lakṣmī).

13. On hearing these words of his father, the prince of fine intelligence devoutly bowed down to the excellent king who was in the company of his step-mother and gave him much wealth for the sake of enjoying pleasures.

14. For the happiness of his father who was distressed, thanks to the activities of the fish-bannered deity (i.e. Cupid), he engaged men-servants who would comply with the commands and women-servants who had gold necklaces.

Thereafter, the son protected the Earth.

15. Dharmavibhūṣaṇa (i.e. Dharmāṅgada) was eulogised by the kings who surrounded him. He moved about in the whole of the Earth consisting of many continents. At that time, O king, (?) the people had no inclination towards sins.

16. The trees were never devoid of fruits and flowers; the fields were never devoid of barley and rice grains. Cows yielded potfulls of milk sweet like sugar and productive of ghee.

17. Under his rule Milk was a good beverage, destructive of all distress, dispelling sins and increasing the development of the body. No man saved and hoarded wealth (for his selfish purpose); no wife spoke harsh or bitter words.

18. The son was humble (all sons were humble) engaged in carying out the behests of his father; the daughter-in-law remained perfectly obedient and submissive to the mother-in-law; the common people abided by the advice of Brāhmaṇas; excellent Brāhmaṇas performed holy rites mentioned in the Vedas.

19. People never took food on the day of Mādhava (Viṣṇu) i.e. on the Ekādaśī day; the rivers never went dry; riches did not get exhausted although they were enjoyed by men in the course of their enjoyment of pleasures.

20. When Dharmāṅgada engaged himself in the protection of his kingdom, the people were contented, as the Dūrvā grass flourishes when watered well and a fine grassy plain is evolved, so people flourished.

21. By observing fast etc. on the day of Hari, men enjoyed pleasures and attained the region of Hari. People, not being afraid of robbers (due to security measures and police protection prevalent then), did not bolt their doors even in dark nights.

22. Cows did not give extra trouble to the cowherds in looking after them; they went to graze according to their own wish and returned to the abodes as usual. They yielded potful of milk in plenty. They were fond of their calves and they spread peace everywhere.

23. The Earth grew plenty of grains etc. without being ploughed. All plants and trees grew up without the use of ploughshare. Infants were nourished by the breast-milk of their mothers. Young damsels were developed and nourished thanks to the activities of their husbands.

24. The people well protected by the king, were fully developed. Virtue in the company of truth was fully developed;

when the people who were endowed with devotion to Hari and who had the great interest in virtue were being protected by the king's son, time passed on causing happiness to all.

25. The king was free from ailment. He was endowed with riches; showering much (i.e. spending a great deal) he celebrated great festivals; he was much enamoured of Mohinī and all her activities gave him happiness.

26. Neither of the day nor of the night was he aware. He was not conscious of the fortnights and months that passed by; even years went by unnoticed; he was so enamoured of the sexual dalliance of the daughter of Brahmā of auspicious activities.

27. The king's virility increased with the loving union with Mohinī; the more he resorted to her with the backing of Kāma (God of Love), the sexual potency increased all the more like the moon in the bright half of the month; it never got exhausted by the frequent indulgence in sex.

28. Just as the Devas become stronger and stronger by imbibing the nectar juice, so also the more he touched her the fresher he became. Drinking charming beverages and listening to sweet songs consisting of melodious tone (he increased in virility and strength).

29-32. Even while glancing at the beauty of the (attendant) women, he touched and caressed the moon-like face of Mohinī. With delight he pressed and caressed her stout breasts resembling gold pots and covered with necklaces and other ornaments. The three curly lines of hair that grew round her navel appeared splendid and charming. On seeing the all-round beauty of the breasts of the fair-limbed lady of splendid eyes, the king thought thus (?) "No other women has a beauty like this. It is charming and pleasing to mind. The way in which the features of Mohinī have been created by Brahmā (is not found elsewhere). It is very fascinating to look at her calves that have the lustre of molten gold, that resemble the paws of a lion and that have no hair on them."

33-34. The row of her teeth had the lustre of the moon. Her hidden ankles had been created for fascinating the people. After seeing the beautiful form, from head to foot of

the lady of large charming eyes, the king considered himself superior to the Devas. He was delighted and considered himself blessed much—O ! whatever this lady of slender frame and large eyes may request me should be given to her.

35-36. For the sweet and charming sexual intercourse with this splendid lady, I will give her in the end all the wealth I possess. Even rare things should be given to her, those things which cannot be given by others, I will give her even those things which should not be given. For example, my life should not be given. But if the gold-complexioned lady requests for it, I will definitely give it to her. I will never think over it hesitatingly. Excepting my son, there is nothing which should not be given to her.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Dharmāṅgada's conquest of quarters (world)

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. Thus eight years passed on happily during which king Rukmāṅgada was deluded by the sexual intercourse with Mohinī.

2-3a. In the course of the ninth year, the king's powerful son Dharmāṅgada attacked and conquered five Vidyādharas on the Malaya, the excellent mountain. He brought as booty five splendid jewels that bestowed all cherished desires.

3b-5. One of the jewels yielded crores and crores of gold pieces, and was very auspicious. The second jewel bestowed lakhs and crores of garments, ornaments etc., the third jewel exuded nectar that rejuvinated the people: the fourth jewel could erect assembly halls and present cooked accomplished food and the fifth enable one to move about anywhere in the three worlds and range through the sky.

6-7. Taking with him those five jewels, the prince instantly came near his step mother and father Rukmāṅgada accompanied by those defeated Vidyādharas and their women folk whose eyes were filled with tears. He bowed down to them and dedicated the five jewels at their feet. With the head bent down in humility he said :—

8. "O king, O dear father, these five Vidyādharas have been defeated by me in battle by the miraculous missile pertaining to Viṣṇu, on the Malaya, the excellent mountain.

9. O excellent king, these (Vidyādharas) and their women folk have come here as your servants. Please present the jewels to Mohinī as ornaments for her arms.

10-11. They are the bestowers of all cherished desires; they cause rejuvination. By wearing the jewels, old shaky teeth become stronger once again. They yield garments, mansions, gold pieces, movement through heaven and nectar. I had to fight them for a month and thanks to your brilliance, these jewels were obtained by me.

12. With great difficulty, O king, the seven island continents were won by me and thanks to your brilliance the people there are compelled to pay tributes.

13. A year elapsed since I entered into the ocean, and the city Bhogavatī surrounded by serpents has been conquered by me.

14. Serpent virgins numbering to ten thousand have been brought over by me. Necklaces and jewels are brought by me in plenty.

15-17a. Thereafter, O dear father, I went to the great city of Dānavas. After defeating them, eight thousand beautiful girls of great splendour are brought by me. O king, ten crores of jewels that carry on the duty of illumination at nightfall have been brought into your mansion.

17b-19. Then I went to the world of Varuṇa situated beneath Rasātala (netherworlds.) There Lord Varuṇa who was puffed with pride of his power and influence, although he deserves to be the servant of your feet, was intimated by me thus—"Stay under the control of my father, King Rukmāṅgada

if you wish to remain alive. At my words Varuṇa was infuriated and he came to fight with me.

20. Then a fight ensued with him terribly at Rasātala and continued for a year. The leader of aquatic forces was defeated by me by means of the miraculous missile pertaining to Nārāyaṇa.

21. At the supplication of young women (his wives), he was not killed. For the protection of his life, ten thousand horses as fast as the wind were given (as tribute) by the defeated (lord).

22. These horses were white in colour with the refulgence of the moon but had one of their ears dark in colour. Without grass and water they could live for many years.

23. A beautiful and fully bedecked virgin was presented to me. Varuṇa gave her to me as my wife. That auspicious girl also has been brought by me.

24-25. The girl was brought by me alongwith much wealth. O dear, there is no spot in the three worlds which had been difficult of access to me and which had not been conquered by me because of the merit of serving your feet. Hence get up and inspect carefully the great fortune earned by me through your grace.

26-27. O Lord of the subjects, myself, all my riches, everything is subservient to you. The son who says "This fortune has been earned by me, it shall not be given to Brāhmaṇas," will fall into hell. O dear father, self-esteem should not be indulged in by the son.

28-30. In regard to the hoarded wealth, the son is like a dagger or a sickle. It is thanks to the heroism of the father that the hoards of wealth of the son increase. Taking a sharp-shining sickle, one cuts off clusters of grass.

If the cloth (mast) is filled with wind, one is enabled to cross a river etc. in a boat. (The sails filled with wind (i.e. the force of wind enables the man in the boat to cross the river (lit. water). Just as the wooden doll of a woman moves and dances in accordance with the desire of the (wire-pulling) juggler, so also the sons are instilled with brilliance and strength through the virility of the father.

31. Hence this good fortune that has been brought by me may be viewed at by you. You may distribute or preserve your riches as you wish or they may be given to the most excellent one among the groups of mothers.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Dharmāṅgada's marriages and his order as a Ruler

Māndhātā enquired :

1. What did the king do on hearing the words of his son ? O Brāhmaṇa, what did the daughter of the creator, Mohinī, the beloved of the king, do ?

2. A particularly wonderful and holy narrative that is comparable to the nectar and is destructive of all doubts has been told by you.

Vasiṣṭha said :

3. On hearing the words of his son, the prominent king became delighted. He got up alongwith his beloved wife and surveyed the wealth (the booty brought by Dharmāṅgada).

4-6a. Instantaneously, O king, the delighted king who was a great devotee of Viṣṇu, joyfully and lovingly gave to his son Dharmāṅgada, all those serpent-girls alongwith the daughter of Varuṇa, for the purpose of becoming his wives. All the remaining things, the king who was overwhelmed by the arrows of Kāma gave to Mohinī along with many jewels and the Dānava women (?)

6b. Thus the father distributed the wealth brought by Dharmāṅgada.

7-8. At an opportune time, the king called his priest and said this : "O Brāhmaṇa, may my son take in marriage the hands of all the virgins in accordance with religious rites.

under the ascendancy of the star propitious for marriages and on the Muhūrta that confers all cherished desires.

9. Having performed the initial religious rite of the proclamation of propitiousness (known as Svasti-Vācana) through Brāhmaṇas and after propitiating them with the gifts of cows, gold, clothes, celebrate the rite of marriage ceremony of my son Dharmāṅgada.

10. The foolish father who does not celebrate the marriage of his son, will sink down in the terrible bottomless hell and remain there for ten thousand Yugas.

11. Hence, the father endowed with (i.e. following) religious rites should celebrate the marriage of his son. He who has settled his son, has also established his own self.

12. O god on the earth (Brāhmaṇa), when the marriage of a son is celebrated, a person derives the benefit of all sacrifices irrespective of the son being endowed with good attributes or devoid of attributes.

13-15a. The marriage of the son must be celebrated by the father who wishes for gaining merit and piety. If the father does not unite (i.e. endow) his sons with wealth and a spouse, he is despised both here and hereafter, and he should not be considered a good man. Hence sons must be settled in avocations and be provided with wives, (they must be given these facilities) so that the sons are satisfied and well honoured and are able to sport (spend their life) happily."

15b-16a. On hearing these words of the king, the Brāhmaṇa his priest, exerted himself assiduously for the celebration of the marriage of Dharmāṅgada, with great. delight.

16b-17a. Though he did not crave for the happiness of contact with women, on account of his bashfulness, the son accepted the betrothal ceremony at the behest of his father.

17b-18a. The prince of mighty arms, unequalled on the Earth in beauty, married the charming serpent-virgins alongwith the daughter of Varuṇa.

18b-19. After marrying all of them in accordance with the injunctions of the sacred texts, he joyously gifted wealth, cows and jewels to the Brāhmaṇas. After the marriage rite, he joyously bowed down to the feet of his mother and father.

20. Then the son Dharmāṅgada spoke to the gentle lady Sandhyāvalī—"O gentle lady, my marriage rite has been celebrated at the instance of my father.

21. I am not retaining the memory of this fact in my mind that my marriage has already been celebrated by my father. O gentle lady, I shall serve as before my unchanging father who is a man of perfect wisdom.

22. I have nothing to do with divine enjoyment of pleasures. I don't have any use even for heaven. Service must be rendered by me to my father as well as to you both by day and at night.

Sandhyāvalī said :

23. O son, live long. Live happily. Enjoy all pleasures in accordance with your mental inclinations (i.e. as you please). May you be long-lived, thanks to the grace of your father. O my son, delight my mind.

24. O son, with you as my son of good qualities, I have become Suputriṇī (mother of a good son). I have got a special place in the hearts of all my co-wives (i.e. all of them love me)."

25. After saying this, the lady embraced him, sniffed many times the crown of his head and finally discharged him to resume his duty of looking after the administration of the kingdom.

26. After being discharged by his mother, he bowed to all the other mothers. Abiding by the advice of his father, the prince looked after the problems of government administration.

27. He chastised and restrained the wicked ones; he protected the good and the well-disciplined men of virtues; he toured over all his lands and personally looked into all affairs.

28. He inspected all the affairs in each place once in a month; he looked after the breeding and rearing of elephants and horses; he surveyed the troops of spies.

29. He observed the arguments (going on in the courts of justice); everyday he examined the measures and balances; he protected men in every house.

30. No infant in the arms accustomed to suck the breasts cried for want of breast milk; nowhere did a mother-in-law lament and complain of being disrespected by the daughter-in-law.

31. No competent and efficient son begged of his father; there was no mixing and mingling of castes in any group again.

32. No man kept any concealed income; no man blamed Dharma; no woman remained without bodice if her husband was alive.

33. "May not there be the coming out of women from their houses in my country. May not the widow keep her tresses in tact.[1] May not the ladies with their husband alive be devoid of hair on their heads.

34. May not the devotee observing holy rites be one who reviles always; may not the forest-dwellers permanently dwell in the city. Let there not be any ruthless person who does not give even ordinary maintenance.

35. Let these not stay in my kingdom—A cowherd desirous of urban life; an advisor devoid of good attributes; a Ṛtvik who has not learned the sacred texts.

1. This reference to tonsure of widows shows the lateness of this portion of NP. in date (not earlier than the 10th Cent. A.D.). There is no injunction or reference to such tonsure in the Vedas, the Gṛhya and Dharma Sūtras or in the old Smṛtis like Manu & Yājñavalkya. The prohibition of widows from "adorning the hair, chewing the betel-nut, using perfumes or decking in flowers and ornaments

(*keśa-rañjana-tāmbūla-gandha-puṣpādisevanam*)

in the *Vṛddha-Hārīta* VIII. 205, shows that tonsure of widows was not in vogue then. References to Kṣatriya widows of the Kaurava and Yādava families in the *Mbh.* (*Strī* 17.25, 21.6; *Mausala* 7-17) shows no reference to their tonsure. Vijñāneśvara, on Yājñavalkya III. 325, approvingly quotes in the *Mitākṣarā* Manu's prohibition of tonsure of women :

vidvad-vipra-nṛpa-strīṇām neṣyate keśa-vāpanam |

A late work or a late interpolation in the Sk. P. gives us its first indication in *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* 4·75 ff.

śiraso vapanaṁ tasmāt kāryam vidhavayā sadā)

Restriction on wearing on bodice along with this shows that both NP & Sk. P. record a period when widows came to be looked upon as *Yatis* (NP. II. 24.15). Kane conjectures that this shows a society in the 10th or 11th cent. A.D. (H.D. II. i. P. 592).

36. The man who grows the indigo plant, the man who sprinkles profusely, the blue colour; these two sinners must be banished and so also the man who brews the liquor.

37. A back-biter, a slanderer who is fond of eating the fish on the back—may he not find a residence in my kingdom. So also the man who forsakes his own wife.

38. These persons are to be punished and given capital punishment—he who eschews Viṣṇu the foremost among the gods and worships any other deity; he who cohabits with a pregnant woman and he who has sexual intercourse with a young woman who has recently delivered of a child.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The glory of the month of Kārttika

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. Thus, O leading king, at the behest of his father, Dharmāṅgada ruled over the kingdom on the earth, observing fast on the day of Hari.

2. There was no such man as was not stabilised in virtue, no one was unhappy, no one was devoid of issues, O king, there was no leper in the kingdom.

3. The Earth yielded treasures to the people who were joyous and well-nourished. O king, even after the calves were fully satisfied, the cows yielded pots full of milk.

4. In every leafy cup there was honey; every tree yielded a Droṇa measure of honey ? The earth being highly delighted, all kinds of grains were produced.

5-14. It was the Dvāparayuga at the end of Tretā but it vied with Kṛta age (in piety). The danger due to clouds disappeared; the sky and the house became free from clouds or impurities. The fragrant Śāli rice grains had ripened. The star canopus (Agastya) surveyed the world (was in ascendancy).

Everywhere the rivers had medium flow of water currents (neither too much nor too little). With the white Kāśa flowers growing on the banks, the rivers appeared like whitehaired ladies, the whole world was whitened by the rays of the moon, the sun was not very fierce; the people in variegated dresses and features thronged rivers and tanks for their holy ablutions; everywhere the kings were eager to go on campaigns of conquests; at the end of Āśvina month, during the period of wakening of Viṣṇu, the preceptor of the Universe, Mohinī the beautiful lady who had delighted the king with nice feelings and different kinds of pleasures (acts of service) was oppressed by mental yearnings. She delighted the king in the forests, on the peaks of mountains, in the confluences of rivers, in the different kinds of lakes, abounding in lotus flowers, on the mountains of Malaya, Mandara, Vindhya, Mahendra, the abode of the Devas, the Sahya, the Himālayas and the auspicious mountain of the sky-clad (naked) God viz. Śiva—i.e. Śiva's mountain of Kailāsa. She gave delight to the king in the heavenly abodes, and other places. O leading king, assuming her divine form, she delighted him day by day. On obtaining Mohinī, the king forsook all holy rites but not the observance on the day of Hari (i.e. the Ekādaśī) that is destructive of births and deaths. Though excessively enamoured of her, the king did not forsake this Vrata.

15-16. The king used to eschew sexual dalliance for three days beginning with Daśamī (the tenth day). Even as he sported like this, one full year elapsed and the auspicious month of Kārttika, the most excellent one in the view of those who know time, arrived once again. This month is highly meritorious, because it puts an end to the slumber of Viṣṇu.

17. O king (Māndhātā), whatever is done in this month is meritorious; the holy rites performed by those men who are the devotees of Viṣṇu shall yield everlasting benefits; they take one to Viṣṇu's world.

18. There is no other month equal to Kārttika; there is no other Yuga equal to Kṛta; there is no other holy rite that is equal to mercifulness; there is no other Jyotis (luminary) equal to the eye.

19. There is no sacred text equal to the Vedas; there is no holy river equal to Gaṅgā; there is no other charitable gift equal to that of lands; no other pleasure is equal to that derived from one's wife.

20. There is no other valuable possession equal to agricultural lands; there is no other profitable acquisition equal to a good cow; there is no greater austerity than abstaining from taking food; there is no other auspicious thing on a par with self control.

21. No other gratification is equal to that of the palate; no one is equal to a Brāhmaṇa; there is no other friend on a par with Dharma (virtue) and there is no other fame equal to that of truthfulness.

22. No other Aiśvarya (prosperity and glory) can be equal to the freedom from ailments, no other deity greater than Keśava. The learned and wise men know of no other thing as sacred as the month of Kārttika in this world.

23-24. Kārttika is the most excellent of all months of which God Viṣṇu is always fond. He who passes this favourite month of Dāmodara without the observance of holy rites, is reborn in the wombs of animals and other creatures. He is excluded from all holy religious rites.

Māndhātā enquired :—

25-26. O sage, when the month of Kārttika arrived, how did king Rukmāṅgada enjoy Mohinī of highly fascinating features ? Tell me. The excellent king was a devotee of Viṣṇu, a follower of the Vedas and the foremost among kings. What did he do in that holiest month ?

Vasiṣṭha replied :

27. On seeing that the month of Kārttika had arrived for the awakening of Hari, the excessively enamoured prominent king spoke these words to Mohinī.

28. O gentle lady, I have had sexual dalliance with you for many years, but nothing against you had been mentioned to by me so far because I had been afraid of being disrespected by you.

29. I am desirous of telling you now. O splendid fair-faced lady, know it. O gentle lady, many Kārttika months have gone by since my infatuation over you.

30. I did not observe any holy rite except the single holy vow of the day of Hari. But now I wish to observe the holy vow of the month of Kārttika.

31. If mortal beings spend the Kārttika month without observing the holy vows, O daughter of Brahmā, all their righteous activities and the Iṣṭāpūrtas (charitable rites such as digging wells, tanks etc. and sacrificial rites) are futile.

32. O blessed lady, even those kings, who are addicted to non-vegetarian diet and who are too much engaged in hunting have eschewed meat in the month of Kārttika and have gone to Viṣṇu's abode.

33. If the aspirant abstains from those foodstuffs to which he is addicted in the month of Kārttika, certainly he attains the form of Viṣṇu.

34. O fair-complexioned lady, let alone the charitable gifts involving the expense of great amounts of wealth and causing great mental strain, one can go to heaven merely by means of the charitable gift of lamps.

35. If that is not available, O blessed lady, one shall kindle the lights offered by others with great devotion. It is superior to all charitable gifts.

36. If one were to weigh all the charitable gifts placed on one side and the charitable gift of lamps on the other side, Lord Kārttikeya has said that the charitable gifts of lamps and the kindling of lamps are on a par with each other.

37-38a. This kindling of lights must be performed with the feelings of devotion. Then it is superior to all kinds of charitable gifts. There is no doubt about this that, by observing the holy rite (by fasting etc.) on the full moon day in the month of Kārttika, in the holy centre of the umbilical lotus of Viṣṇu (i.e. Puṣkara), one is liberated from the sins committed ever since the birth.

38b-39a. He who observes holy vows, fasts and other restraints throughout the month of Kārttika shall become a

Deva with an aerial chariot and he attains the highest beatitude.

39b-41a. Hence, O Mohinī, eschew your delusion and fascination over me; command me immediately. I shall perform the holy rite of Kārttika Vrata. O lotus-eyed lady, I shall desist from the worship of your breasts and I shall observe the vows for the worship of Hari.

Mohini said :

41b-43. Narrate in detail the greatness of Kārttika. O excellent king, this month is said to be the receptacle of all merits. O highly intelligent one, what are the special features mentioned and where ? After hearing about the greatness of Kārttika, I shall perform it as desired.

Rukmāṅgada said :

44. O fair-faced lady, I shall tell you the greatness of this month,[1] whereby you will have devotion (engendered in you) for the performance of the worship of Hari.

45-46. The man who performs the Kṛcchra penance or the Prājāpatya rite[2] in the month of Kārttika or observes fast on alternate days or once in three days, or for ten days, or for a fortnight or for the whole of the month, O fair-complexioned lady attains the greatest region of Viṣṇu.

1. The month of Kārttika is regarded as the holiest month, holier than all *Tīrthas* (sacred places) and great sacrifices. The glory of Kārttika is detailed in Pd. P. VI. Chs. 92-95. A number of vratas are prescribed for performance in this month. *vide* CG. *Vrata* II. 769-784, *Smṛti-Kaustubha* 358-427, *Nirṇaya Sindhu* 192-208. For their alphabetic list HD V. 1. 283-285.

2. The *Prājāpatya Vrata* consists of donation of a cow at the end of *Kṛcchra* penance and feeding Brāhmaṇas according to one's ability. Fruit—a place in god Śiva's region.

Kṛcchrānte gopradaḥ kuryād bhojanaṁ śaktitaḥ padaṁ
Viprāṇāṁ Śāṅkaraṁ yāti Prājāpatyam idaṁ vratam

- Mt. P. 100.66

It may be noted that this Vrata is different from *Prajāpati Vrata* which (according to *Praśnopaniṣad* I. 15) means 'indulging in sexual intercourse only at night'.

47. If in this month one takes only one meal per day or takes food at night only, or takes only what is received unsolicited, the whole Earth consisting of a series of continents is obtained by the vow-observing men.

48. This month is said to be the bestower of devotion through Vratas, charitable gifts, worship etc. especially in the holy centre of Puṣkara, the city of Dvārāvatī and in Śaukara (Soron on the Gaṅgā near Itah).

49-50a. In this month the day of Hari is sacred; so also the five days called Bhīṣmapañcaka[1] (i.e. from the eleventh day to the full moon day of the Kārttika). If the Prabodhinī (wakening, the eleventh day or Ekādaśī called the "wakening of the Lord") day is spent by observing fast alongwith keeping awake at night, even a sinful man will never stay in the womb of a mother.

50b-51a. O fair lady, a person who sees a Maṇḍala (halo, disc of the sun) on that day attains the greatest region without having recourse to the systems of Sāṁkhya and Yoga.

51b-52a. O auspicious lady, by seeing Maṇḍala in the month of Kārttika, or Śūkara in the holy centre of Śaukara or by seeing Kokavarāha (the Boar incarnation of Viṣṇu) one does not become a son once again (i.e. one attains Mokṣa).

52b-53. O lady of unsteady side glances by seeing Maṇḍala or Śrīdhara in Kubjaka, men are liberated from the three types of sins. One shall avoid oil and honey in the month of Kārttika.

54-55. One should avoid meat in the month of Kārttika,[2] one shall also abstain from women in the month of

1. *Bhīṣma-pañcaka* is a special Vrata to be performed for five days from the Kārttika Śu. 11 to the Full moon day. The performer has to take three baths per day, perform *Tarpaṇa*, *Japas* or 108 times repetition of the *mantra*, *Oṁ namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya*, worship of Viṣṇu and *Homa* with the mantra *Oṁ namo Viṣṇave* and partake of the five components of *Pañca-gavya* respectively on each day of the Vrata: feeding of Brāhmaṇas and giving of religious fees.

2. Abstinence from flesh-eating in Kārttika is regarded as equivalent to performance of severe penance for one hundred years (*Kṛtya Ratnākara* 397-99). Abstinence of meat-eating during the Bhīṣma pañcaka period is called *Baka-Pañcaka* (*Kṛtya-ratnākara* 425).

Kārttika. O gentle lady, in the month of Kārttika a person devoted to Viṣṇu shall avoid Niṣpāva (? the bran blown away by the winnowing siev). He shall instantaneously be liberated from the sins committed in the course of the year. By taking a meal once a day the devotee attains royal womb (i.e. is born in a royal family).

56. The foolish person who partakes a bacon in the month of Kārttika is cooked (or roasted) in the Raurava hell for sixty thousand years.

57-58. Having been liberated from it, the sinner is born as a rural pig that eats faeces. No man shall eat fish or the flesh of a tortoise or a dear in the month of Kārttika. O gentle lady, by eating flesh in the month of Kārttika one is born as a Cāṇḍāla. Even if one observes a minor Vrata, Kārttika destroys all sins.

59. The initiation undertaken in the month of Kārttika is destructive of births of men. Hence, one shall assiduously undertake initiation in the month of Kārttika.

60. O lady of beautiful thighs, every thing performed by one who has not undergone initiation is futile. A man devoid of initiation attains the womb of an animal.

61. The Kārttika Vrata shall not be performed at home especially on the eleventh day of the Kārttika month. A man who performs the Kārttika Vrata in a holy centre attains the region of Hari.

62. A man shall observe fast on the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika and on the next day, in the morning, he should give auspicious pots whereby he attains the abode of Hari.

63-65. The conclusion of all the Vratas in the course of a year is laid down in smṛtis in the month of Kārttika. In the holy centre of Puṣkara marriages are seen performed even without insisting on Uttarāyaṇa (northern transit of the sun) and the auspiciousness of Lagna (astrological division of time) especially during these four days in this month, O lady of fair complexion. The connections entered into during that period cause the increase of sons and grandsons. Hence, O Mohinī, I shall perform the holy rite in the month of Kārttika

for the destruction of all sins and for the crease of your love".

Mohini said :

66-67. O The incomparable greatness of the month of Kārttika has been described by you. Kindly recount the rules of procedure of the concluding rites of Cāturmāsya Vratas (holy rites during the four months of the rainy season) O Lord of the earth, whereby the Vratas shall be complete and there will not be any deficiency or omission in the Vrata or in the benefit, thereof.

The king said :

68. O beloved wife, the devotee who performs the Naktavrata (i.e. taking food only at night) should feed a Brāhmaṇa with food-stuffs consisting of all the six tastes.

69. If he performs the rite of Ayācita (not begging for anything) he shall give a bull as gift along with gold. A person who does not eat flesh (meat) shall give a cow as gift alongwith Dakṣiṇā.

70. In the rite of ablution with embylic myrobalan, the man should give curds and milk-puddings. If the person observes the vow of abstaining from fruits, O lady of good eyebrows, he should make gifts of fruits.

71. If one has eschewed oil, one shall make gifts of ghee and if one has eschewed ghee, one shall make gifts of milk. If there is a vow restricting the eating of grains, one should give Śāli (rice) or the respective grains of corn.

72. If the vow is for laying down on the bare ground, he should make gift of a mattress filled with cotton along with four cowries as Dakṣiṇā. If the devotee has vowed to take food on leaves, he shall give a vessel full of ghee.

73. If the devotee has vowed silence, he should give either a bell or gingelly seeds alongwith gold. He should feed a couple and give beds for both.

74. The enjoyment of pleasures shall be alongwith Dakṣiṇās for the sake of completion of the Vrata. If the rite is regular morning ablution, he should offer a horse; if the vow is for eschewing oily stuff, he shall offer ghee and barley.

75. If the rite is for growing nails and hair he should give a mirror as a gift. If the rite is for eschewing foot-wear he should give a pair of shoes.

76. If one has vowed to forsake salt, a good cow is to be given; if one has eschewed meat eating, one should give a tawny coloured cow with its calf.

77-78. If one has vowed the offering of the lighted lamp in one's favourite temple every day, one should give a lamp made of gold or copper alongwith ghee. O beloved one, for the completion of the Vrata he should give an umbrella to a devotee of Viṣṇu alongwith a cloth. One who has undertaken fast on alternate days, should give silk-garment as a gift.

79. If one has undertaken fast once in three days one should give a fully bedecked bed accompanied by gold. In the fasts such as one for six successive days etc., one should give a palanquin alongwith umbrella.

80. If the vow is for a single meal per day, one should give stout bull alongwith a man to look after the same, or goats and sheep. If one has vowed for a fruitarian diet, one shall give gold as gift.

81. If one has vowed vegetable diet one shall give fruit as gift alongwith gold and ghee. If one has eschewed all tasty beverages, one shall give even what is not mentioned here as a gift.

82-84. One must give silver or gold vessel as gift in accordance with one's capacity. If one does not follow the injunctions in the performance of these rites or if one does give things mentioned as gifts (one will incur sin). O beautiful lady of good eyebrows, one must abide by the advice of the Brāhmaṇa priest and perform the rite with the remembrance of Viṣṇu. O auspicious lady, if one considers the statement (i.e. advice) of the Brāhmaṇa futile and does not give Dakṣiṇās, one certainly falls into hell, if there is omission or deficiency in the Vrata the man becomes a leper and a blind fellow.

85-86. The heaven-dwellers, the group of holy centres, the sacrifices of all these are well established in the words of Brāhmaṇas. O beautiful lady, who will transgress their words, if he desires welfare and if he is a sensible scholar and knowledgeable person.

87. This is the secret of Dharma (holy rites) that has been mentioned to you in the same manner as it had been mentioned to Brahmā by Lord of Śrī (Viṣṇu). It should not be divulged to others. It is beneficial and it is the cause of Mādhava's satisfaction.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The dialogue with Rukmāṅgada

Mohinī said :

1. The statement made by you about the observance of fast in the month of Kārttika is quite excellent. But the observance of Vrata etc. by kings is not found anywhere in the sacred texts.

2. In fact, excepting for a Brāhmaṇa, it has not been prescribed for anyone else; not for the Śūdras and the Vaiśyas too. (As the duty) of the kings, charitable gifts, protection (of subjects) and fighting are laid down (in Smṛtis).

3. If you wish to retain me as your beloved, the Vrata should not be observed by you. O leading king, I cannot remain without ou even for a Muhūrta.

4-5a. O dear king having the lustre of god Brahmā, how can I remain separated for a period of month? O ruler of the Earth, where you think of observing fast, food should rather be offered in lieu of it to Brāhmaṇas of noble souls. Or may the eldest of all your wives observe the Vratas.

5b-6. When this was argued by Mohinī, Rukmabhūṣaṇa (i.e. Rukāṅgada) called his auspicious and beloved wife Sandhyāvalī. The instant she was called, she came near the king who was one who had distributed religious gifts and fees in plenty.

7-8. He was seated on a divine like splendid bed clasped between the arms of Mohinī. The tip of her breasts resem-

bled golden pitcher when rubbing against him. ,O king (Māndhātā) he was seated on the mattress of the lustful lady of charming eyes. With the palms joined in reverence, Sandhyāvalī stooped down her neck in bowing down to her husband.

9. She said to the king, " O darling, why have I been called? Being completely free from the jealousy usual among co-wives, I have always abided by your order.

10. There is no doubt about this, O king, that the more you indulge in sexual dalliance with Mohinī the more my pleasure increases.

11-12. O king, the woman who becomes miserable at the personal pleasure of her husband is reborn as a she-falcon for eight years (?). Command me, O king, do not get abashed due to your lustfulness.

Rukmāṅgada said :

13. O fair lady, I know your good conduct, and the nobility of your birth. It was at your instance that sexual dalliance with Mohinī for a long time was indulged in by me.

14. Many Kārttika months have gone by while I indulged in sexual dalliance. Though I have been enamoured of the happiness derived from my beloved, the day of Hari (i.e. Ekādaśī) did not slip by.

15. By my frequent enjoyment of lustful pleasures I have achieved satiety. This month of Kārttika is known to be the destroyer of all sins.

16. O gentle lady, I am desirous of observing the holy vow of Kārttika Vrata that yields great merit. But O auspicious lady, this daughter of Brahmā prevents me from observing it.

17. O fair-complexioned lady, by no means should anything displeasing to her be committed. Hence you take up my Vrata called Kṛcchra that dries up the body.

18. On being urged thus by her husband, the lady whose complexion was like that of newly burnished gold, whose breasts and other limbs were plump and whose face resembled the moon spoke these words :— "I shall observe the holy Vrata for your satisfaction."

19. O Lord of rulers of men, I shall perform only those things whereby you will have fame and renown, whereby you will have happiness without prejudice to your good reputation. I shall even cast off my tender body into the fire for your sake.

20. O king, at your instance, I will even kill my son. I will not consider it as something that should not be done. All the more, O ruler of men, I shall perform this simple holy rite."

21. After saying this and after bowing to the king who was the enemy of the son of the sun (i.e. Yama), the gentle lady of charming large eyes performed holy rite for the destruction of sins.

22. When the excellent holy penance ealled Kṛcchra was begun by his beloved wife, the king derived much pleasure. He spoke these words to the daughter of the Kuśa-emblemed deity (Brahmā)—"O lady of beautiful eyebrows, your suggestion has been carried out in accordance with your desire.

23. O beautiful lady with thighs resembling metacarpus, sport as you please with the gladness of your heart. Leave off your cares and concentrate your ambitions and desires in me. O lady of sweet eye-brows, for your sake I have eschewed my duties. There is no other woman to give me happiness."

24. On being thus addressed by her Lord, she attained great pleasure. She spoke to the king thus :— "O Lord, It was after knowing that you are exceedingly loving (and tender) that I had come to you from the heaven.

25. I had forsaken the immortal ones, the groups of Daityas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, serpents and Rākṣasas, who were awaiting me. Overcome with love, I approached you at the mountain of Mandara.

26. The like-mindedness of both (husband and wife) is the real fruit of passion. Passionate union with the mind elsewhere is no better than the union of two corpses.

27. Fruitful is my body. Fruitful is my beauty. O lover, with you full of love towards me, I have acquired that which is very rare in the three worlds.

28-29a. When the heart clasped within plump protrud-

ing breasts does not relent (break), I think it is certainly like Indra's thunderbolt. The nectarine juice from the lips of beautiful ladies is the very ambrosia in the world. It is being drunk with the breasts pressed close to the heart."

29b-30a. After saying this, the lady of slender limbs embraced the king who was in the secluded spot and delighted him in accordance with the injunctions of Vātsyāyana[1], the author of erotic science (Kāma-sūtra).

30b-31. Even as he was diverting himself in the company of Mohinī, the sound of drums which were placed on an intoxicated elephant according to the decree of Dharmāṅgada reached his ears.

32. "O people, the day of Hari dawns tomorrow. Remain with only a single meal.[2] All shall eschew alkaline salts, taking in only Havisya (cooked rice soaked in ghee).

33. You must lie down on the bare ground. You must avoid sexual union with your beloved wives. Remember the Lord of the Chief of the Devas, the ancient and excellent Puruṣa.

34-35a. Either take a single meal or observe fast. You will thereby be able to go to the region of Śrī Hari without performing a series of Śrāddhas, without offering or taking Piṇḍas and even when your sons have not gone to Gayā.[3]

1. Vātsyāyana (Circa 300-400 A.D.) is the author of the famous treatise, *Kāma Sūtra*. The instructions on erotics mentioned here are given in the *Adhikaraṇa* (section) on *Sāmprayogika*. For details *vide Kāma sūtra* with com. *Jayamaṅgalā*. (Chowkhamba, 1912.)

2. Compare the procedure of the Ekādaśi Vrata *Supra* I. Ch. 23.

3. A famous sacred place in Bihar. It is supposed that by performing *Śrāddha* and offering *Piṇḍas* on Viṣṇupada at Gayā one redeems one thousand generations and takes them and himself to the world of Viṣṇu. The sacredness of the place and its efficacy to redeem the ancestors of the pilgrim is glorified in many other Purāṇas like *AP.*, *Vāyu* etc. Thus the *Vāyu* 105.30 states he who performs Śrāddha at Gayā repays his debts to his ancestors.

Śrāddha-kṛd yo Gayā-kṣetre pitṛṇām anṛṇo hi saḥ /

For details *vide infra* Chs. 44 to 47 with annotations.

35b-38a· This is the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, which dispels the slumber of Hari. The Ekādaśī dawns tomorrow. Do not take food at all. If one observes fast on the Prabodhinī Ekādaśī day, all the sins such as the slaughter of a Brāhmaṇa and the like which one might have committed wilfully, disappear. This is called Prabodhinī Ekādaśī because it enlightens virtuous persons and those who practise just activities. Also it wakens Hari from slumber.

38b-39a. The man who at least once observes the fast on this day that dispels the slumber of Hari, does not become a son once again. He is not reborn in any womb.

39b-40. O men, perform the worship of the discus-bearing Lord with your own wealth, clothes, flowers, incense, lights, excellent sandal paste, saffron, sweet fruits and scents. All of you worship the feet of Śrī Hari.

41. He who does not carry out my instructions, conducive to the attainment of piety and salvation (attainment to the vision of Viṣṇu), is liable (lit. deserves) to be killed, banished from the realm or certainly punished (otherwise) by me."

42. While the drum that had the sound of the clouds was being beaten to proclaim as before, the most excellent king dropped down the chewing betel along with camphor from his hand.

43. Withdrawing his chest that was in contact with the breasts of Mohinī, the king (though) of enhanced appetite for sexual pleasure, stood up from his bed.

44. With bland speech he consoled Mohinī who was afflicted with delusion and passion :— "O gentle lady the day of Hari that is destructive of sins dawns tomorrow.

45. I will be observing restraints. May I be forgiven. May I be excused. At your behest the Kṛcchra penance is being caused to be performed by Sandhyāvalī.

46. But this Ekādaśī vow that is called Prabodhakāraṇī should be performed by me. It cuts off bonds of all sins. It bestows salvation.

47. To all the three worlds, it is the cause of celebrating great festivities. Hence, O lady of elated gait, I will partake of only Haviṣya invariably.

48. O lady of large eyes propitiate Adhokṣaja (Viṣṇu) Hṛṣīkeśa along with me, by being engaged in the observance of fast. Thereby, you will attain salvation devoid of burning sensation and dissolution.

Mohinī said :

49. O king, you have spoken pertinently. At your behest, I shall perform the worship of the discus-bearing deity, that dispels births, deaths and old age.

50-52a. The time of fulfillment has come for that vow (promise) that had been undertaken by you formerly on the top of the Mandara mountain, along with the offering of the hand. It was marked by staking your merits. Hence, may that be given to me. If you do not grant me that boon, all the merits that you have accumulated since your birth with great difficulty, will perish instantaneously.

Rul māṅgada said :

52b-53. Come on, O lady of charming limbs I will carry out whatever you entertain in your mind. There is nothing which should not be given to you. Even my life shall be given to you, O beautiful lady—what then of villages, wealth etc. including the earth.

Mohinī said :

54-57. O Lord, O love, O powerful king, O Lord of my life fond of sexual intercourse, if I, your beloved wife, am to be enjoyed, no fast should be observed on the day of Viṣṇu. O king, am I not your beloved wife ? I do not wish to spend even a Muhūrta without contact with you, O excellent one. So O king, devoted to truth, if you wish to enjoy me, give up this vow of fast. May food be taken on the day of Hari.

57-58a. It is this boon that should be granted to me. This is what had been requested for by me formerly. O leading king, if you do not grant it (this boon) to me, you will become a man of falsehood. You will fall into a terrible hell (and remain there as long as all living beings are dissolved. (upto the end of the world).

The king implored :

58b. O auspicious lady, please do not speak like this. This is not proper on your part ?

59. Why do you, though a daughter of god Brahmā, create obstacles in the observance of holy rites. Ever since my birth I have never taken food on the day of Hari.

60-61a. O auspicious lady, now that my hairs have begun to turn grey, how shall I take food ? Having recourse to the heavenly river (i.e. the Gaṅgā) or the worship of Hari is proper in case of a man who has gone beyond the prime of youth and the power of whose sense-organs has dwindled.

61b-62a. This (i.e. taking food on the Ekādaśī day) is what has not been committed by me whether in boyhood or in youth. It is a despicable act. How can I perform it now, when I have become feeble and am lacking in virility ?

62b-63. Be pleased, O lady of roving side-glances. be pleased, O fair-complexioned lady. Do not create obstacles in my Vrata. I shall give you the riches of the kingdom. O lady of beautiful eyes, if you do not wish for it, I shall do another thing.

64. I shall make you seated in a palanquin that is very splendid and resembling the aerial chariot. Accompanied by my wife, I shall walk on food and take you wherever you wish.

65-66. If you do not like the aerial chariot made by me, I will make two pillars of gold adorned with corals. O my beloved wife, I will prepare a swing of pearls for your sake. I shall swing you therein day and night for many months.

67-68. O my beloved lady, O beautiful one, do not create obstacles in the performance of my holy rite. If food is taken on the day of Hari, O fair-faced lady, it is more despicable than eating the flesh (from the hands) of a Cāṇḍāla or that of a dog. If one indulges in sexual intercourse when the moon dwindles (i.e. on the New Moon day), one incurs the sin of destroying the three worlds.

69-70. A man incurs sins in the following circumstances: —if he gets himself shaved on the Bhūta day (i.e. the fourteenth day in the dark half of the month of Kārttika); if he takes food on the day of Viṣṇu; if he takes oil bath on Ṣaṣṭhī (sixth day of

a lunar fortnight); if he takes salt, O auspicious lady, on the Tṛtīyā (third) day and meat on the Saptamī (seventh) day if he takes in ghee on the full moon day and drinks liquor during the transit of the sun from one sign of zodiac to another.

71-73. On the day of Hari, food (to be taken in) contains the sin accrued in the following acts viz.—if one spoils the pasture-land of cows., if one commits perjury; if one misappropriates a deposit, if one causes hardships to a virgin (e.g. making her marriage impossible), if one commits breach of trust; if one milks a cow the calf of which is dead; if he does not give an excellent Brāhmaṇa what he solemnly promises to give saying 'I will give you", in Maṇikūṭa (fraud committed in regard to a precious gem), in Tulākūṭa (in using false weights), in Kanyānrta (in uttering a lie about a virgin) and in Gavānrta (in uttering a lie over a cow). Hence, O fair-eyed lady, how shall I take food knowing that it is a great sin?

Mohini said :

74-77. While I was in the mountain of Mandara, Gautama told me thus : O leading king, one shall not pass an Ekādaśī day by taking in single meal throughout the day or a nocturnal meal or unsolicited food[1] or by observing fast. Observance of fast is not proper for women advanced in pregnancy, for Gṛhasthas (worshippers) of domestic sacrificial fires), Kṛśas (worn-out weaklings), sick men, Śiśu (children) and the wrinkled worne-out bodied (old people). O leading king, those who are engaged in Yajñas and their enjoyment, those who serve the Earth, those who fight and the Pativratās (chaste ladies) must not observe fast.

1. This verse is found in other Purāṇas e.g. Mk. P. quoted by Hemādri on *Kāla* p. 170, Gd, P. I. 136. 2-3. The snag in Mohini's argument is that she applies these to an ablebodied person like Rukmāṅgada. Manu X 1.28 & 30 forbids an able-bodied capable person to resort to these alternatives. *Mbh. Śānti* 165.17 supports this. The terms *ekabhakta* or *abhukta* (taking meal after mid-day-*dinārdha-samayetīte*), *nakta* (taking food after the appearance of stars after the sun-set) and *ayācita* (subsistence on food not obtained by begging or soliciting) were used formerly with reference to *Prāyaścittas* like *Kṛcchra*. They came to be applied to fasts in Purāṇas later on.

78. O excellent man, the day of Viṣṇu must not be spent without the observance of Vrata. Those Brāhmaṇas who have maintained the sacred fire should be known as Gṛhasthas (householders).

79. Those who abide by the duties of protecting the subjects should be known as Rājas (kings). Gurviṇī is the lady who is pregnant for eight months. Śiśus are children upto their eighth year.

80. Kṣīṇas are those who observe too many fasts. Valigātras are those old men (whose body contains wrinkles) Mahotsavas are those who are busily engaged in auspicious rites such as marriage etc.

81-82. Those who are engaged in Yajñas are the persons who refrain from worldly activities. (Defective) The woman who is engaged in the welfare of her hnsband by means of the three Karaṇas(organs etc) (i.e. mind, body and speech) should be known as Pativratā (chaste lady). So also the woman who protects her vaginal passage. O king, of what avail are the many utterances I may indulge in ?

83. I will be pleased if you take food on the Ekādaśī day but I won't by pleased even if you cut off your own head and give it to me.

84. O king, if you do not take food on the day of Hari, I will not touch the body belonging to you who are untruthful in your words.

85. O leading king, truthfulness is revered among people of all stages of life and castes. O king, especially it is so among rulers of kingdom like you.

86. It is through truth that the sun blazes;[1] the moon shines through truth. O king, the Earth is established in truth. It is the truth that upholds the universe.

87. The wind blows through truthfulness and the fire burns through truth. This entire Universe consisting of the mobile and the immobile beings has truth for its support.

88. It is through truth that the ocean does not move

1. It appears that in VV. 86-89 the Vedic concept of *Ṛta* is extended to *Satya* (Truth).

(away from its place). O king (for the same reason) the Vindhya mountain does grow (rise) up. Never does a yonng woman carry the child in her crossing the time limit (i.e. beyond a stipulated period of about ten months, she does not hold it.)

89. It is only when they are abiding by truthfulness that trees put forth flowers and fruits. O king, the means of Divine judgement, etc. of men has for its basis, truthfulness alone.

90. Truthfulness surpasses thousands of horse-sacrifices. Through falsehood you will be tainted with such a sin as that of drinking liquor.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Questions of Mohini[1]

The king said :

1-2. You mention that it had been recounted to you by Gautama on the excellent mountain Mandara that food be taken on the day of Hari. But this is contrary to the opinion of the Purāṇas. O fair-faced lady, it has been mentioned by that Brāhmaṇa who indulges in spreading the insignificant sacred texts out of greed.

3-5. The following decisions have been proclaimed in the Purāṇas by learned men viz—one should not drink water with

1. This chapter describes a typical conflict between parochical Vedists and *Vaiṣṇavas*. This part of the NP. is meant for the glorification of the Ekādaśī Vrata. Though this topic is discussed in Part I Ch. 23 (and elsewhere), a detailed description and importance of this Vrata is found (sometimes repeated in this part also. This chapter emphasizes the importtance of complete fasts of Ekādaśī and the acceptance of the authority of Purāṇas in interpreting the Vedas. The medieval writers who compiled treatises on Ekādaśī (e.g. Śūlapāṇi's *Ekādaśi Viveka*, Raghunandana's *Ekādaśitattva*) and on *Kāla* (e.g. *Hemādri* on *Kāla*, *Mādhava* on *Kālanirṇaya*) have profusely quoted the NP as an authority on Ekādaśi. Hence the importance of these chapters.

a conch shell; one must not kill* 'tortoises' and 'pigs;' food should not be taken on the eleventh day in either half of the month. The sin of taking food on that day, O gentle lady, is the same as that of the sexual intercourse with a forbidden woman or that of eating forbidden food or that of doing a prohibited act. It is also equal to the slaughter of a thousand cows. O, gentle lady, how can I take food on the day of Hari in spite of my knowledge of this ?

6. O lady of charming thighs, when the day of Hari has dawned, even the Puroḍāśa (the sacrificial oblation of ground rice) is declared to be equal to the forbidden food. What then about the (ordinary) food taken in by way of regular meal ?

7. O fair-complexioned lady, roots, fruits, milk and water are mentioned by leading sages as favourable foodstuffs of feeble men. They can be eaten.

8-9. But taking full meal on the Ekādaśī day has not been recommended by anyone. Abstinence from food is recommended in the case of persons suffering from fever, and observance of full fast in the case of righteous persons, when the day of Hari has dawned. This is auspicious and conducive to the attainment of salvation. Even if Pathya (wholesome) food is taken in the middle of fever, it is likely to result in death.

10. If food is taken on the day of Viṣṇu (Ekādaśī) it leads only to a fall in hell. O lady of beautiful thighs, please don't insist, let there be no breaking of my holy vow. If there is anything else that appeals to you I shall undoubtedly do it.

**Khādet* should be the reading in the NP. as it is found in this verse in KP. and Devala Smrti. For discussion vide note below.

This verse is attributed to the KP and Devala Smrti in the *Nirṇaya Sindhu*, p. 35, and to *Viṣṇudharmottara P.* by Hemādri in *Kāla*. But those verses read

na khādet Kūrma-śūkarau

The reading *na khādet* is better as *Kūrma* and *Śūkara* are the bulbous roots called *Kaṅgar* and *Kon* in Marathi and the question of 'killing' bulbous roots does not arise. Moreover, the reading in the NP. will amount to a license in killing other animals including cows. But the reading should be decided on the MS evidence of the NP.

Mohinī insisted :

11-12. "O king, nothing else appeals to me except your taking food. No purpose of mine is served even by your dedication of life. Moreover, the observance of fast on the day of Hari is not found in the Vedas.

13. The Brāhmaṇas maintaining the holy sacrificial fires do not accept the observance of fast. How is it that you wish to practise a rite that is outside the pale of the Vedas. ?"

14. O King (Māndhātā), on hearing the words of Mohinī, the king who was the most excellent one among the knowers of the Vedas said laughingly though he got furious in mind.

15-17. "O Mohinī, listen to my words. The performance of sacrifices has its procedure in the Veda (Kriyā Veda) and in the stage of life of a householder the Smṛtis are like the Vedas. The Vedas in the form of Smṛtis and the Kriyā Vedas are based on the Purāṇas. Just as this wonderful universe is born of Purāṇapurusa (the ancient Puruṣa or Being) so also the whole range of literature undoubtedly originates from the Purāṇas. O fair-faced lady, I, therefore, consider the meanings of the Purāṇas superior to the meanings of the Vedas.[1]

18. All the Vedas are ever established in the Purāṇas. The Veda is afraid of a man of deficient learning, thinking "O, this man will strike me."

1. VV. 15-22 establish the authoritative nature of the Purānas and their relation *vis-á-vis* the Vedas. The NP regards Purāṇas as the essence of all the Vedas (*supra* I. 1. 61-62), nay their import ss superior to the Vedas. And the NP is not the only Purāṇa to hold this view. For example, the Sk. P. repeats the very wording of these verses : e.g.

Vedāḥ pratiṣṭhitāḥ sarve purāṇe nātra saṁśayaḥ /
bibhetyalpa-śrutād Vedo mām ayam prahariṣyati //
yan na dṛṣṭaṁ hi Vedeṣu tad dṛṣṭam smṛtibhiḥ kila /
ubhābhyāṁ yan na dṛṣṭaṁ hi tat purāṇeṣu gīyate //
purāṇaṁ sarva-śāstrāṇām prathamaṁ Brahmaṇā smṛtam/

—*Revā Khaṇḍa* I. 20-23.

The equivalence of Purāṇas with the Vedas has been stated in the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Up.* (11. 4. 10) where both of them are regarded as the exhalation of God. This authority of Purāṇas is confirmed by Vātsyāyana in his com. on *Nyāya Sūtra* IV. 1.62, Kumārila in *Tantra-Vārttika*. On Jaimini's *Pūrva-mīmāṁsā sūtra* I. 3. 1 and Śaṅkara on *Br. Sūtra* I.3.33.

19. There is no mention about the movements of the planets in the Vedas:[1] there is no indication of the time that is endowed with purity; nor (can we find these things therein) viz. the increase and the decrease of the Tithis nor the decision about the Parvans (New Moon and full moon) or the position of the planets.

20. Formerly, these had been decided by means of the Itihāsas and the Purāṇas ; what is not seen in the Vedas is observed fully in the Smṛti.

21. What is not seen in both of these is explained by the Purāṇas, as for example, the expiatory rites in the cases of killing. O beloved wife, it is like the medicine in the case of a seriously ill patient.

22-25a. (If the Purāṇas had not explained the expiatory rites)it would not have been possible to have purification from sins in one's own case or in the case of others. O lady of beautiful eyebrows, what is sung about by the Vedas, what is recounted by the Vādāṅgas (ancillaries) is explained in detail by the Purāṇas and Smṛtis. O fair-faced lady, the Purāṇas repeat often like this—"when the day of Hari has arrived, food should not be eaten, food should never be eaten." By disregarding the Purāṇas one will attain the womb of animal. Even if one has taken holy ablutions, even if he has perfect self-control he will not attain salvation if he disregards the Purāṇas.

25b-26. Who will not salute his father ? Who will not worship his mother ? Who will not go to Gaṅgā the holiest of all rivers. Who will eat food on the day of Hari ? Who will slander the Vedas ? Who will cause the downfall of a Brāhmaṇa.

27. Who will have sexual intercourse with another man's wife ? Who will take food on the day of Hari ?

28. O beloved one, there is no other sin for a creature of muddleheaded nature, than taking food on the day of Hari. O lady of bright eyes, it is the cause that makes one fall into the pit (hell) of Yama.

1. VV. 19-22 state what topics are not mentioned in the Vedas but are decided in Purāṇas. Hence their superiority in some respects.

Mohini said :

29. "O Ghūrṇikā (the name of the female attendant) bring here immediately those Brāhmaṇas who are the masters of the Vedas. It is likely that on being convinced by means of their words, the king may take food."

30. On hearing her words she (i.e. Ghūrṇikā) brought Gautama and the other Brāhmaṇas who were masters of the Vedas, near Mohinī.

31. On seeing the Brāhmaṇas, the experts in the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas come, Mohinī who was interested in her own affairs saluted them in the company of the king.

32. O king, all of them had the refulgence of the blazing fires. They sat on seats made of gold.

33-34a. Gautama who was the oldest among them spoke these words :"O queen, we experts in the different branches of sacred literature who dispel all doubts, have come here, for the purpose we have been called by you."

34b-35a. On hearing the words of those (Brāhmaṇas), Mohinī the daughter of Brahmā, spoke to them who were engaged in doing what was impossible for others.

Mohini said :

35b-36. The doubt here is whether this man is stupid or deficient in intellect (?) The king says—"I will not take food on the day of Hari." (But) this entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings has food as its support.

37-38a. Even the dead persons, the Pitṛs (manes) in the heaven are delighted with cooked food. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, the Devas desire for cooked rice, the Puroḍāśa [sacrificial oblations with ground rice) of the size of Jujube fruit. Hence cooked rice is the greatest nectar.

38b-39. Even the hungry man takes a bit of rice in its mouth and enters its crevice with great strain. To whom does not the food appeal ? But this king does not eat cooked rice and other edibles, when the day of Hari has arrived.

40. He has forsaken his own holy duties and abides by other peoples' Dharma. It is but proper on the part of widows and ascetics to observe Vratas.

41. The man who is devoted to other peoples' Dharma and averse to his own Dharma, sinks deep down into blinding darkness of hell and remains there as long as fourteen Indras reign.

42. It has not been mentioned anywhere that kings should abandon their legitimate duty of protecting their subjects that bestow on them the fourfold aims of life, and perform the vow of fasting.

43. (The following are the legitimate duties of the concerned persons). Service to their husbands by women; service to their parents by sons; service to the twice-born by the Śūdras and the protection of the world by the kings.

44. If out of blunder or ignorance, a person forsakes his duties and applies his efforts elsewhere, he shall undoubtedly face a downfall.

45. O Brāhmaṇas, this king of good intellect and of excellent conduct practises Dharma of ascetics and forsakes what his dharma is laid down in the Vedas.

46-47a. O Brāhmaṇas, the following fall into hell : viz.—a woman who behaves according to her own sweet will, an impudent son, a king who practises isolation, a servant who shirks work, and a person who has no steadiness and stability.

47b-48. Suppose the king is engaged in the worship of Hari and maintains all observances and also suppose some one cries out in distress. At that time, if he does not rush out leaving aside his worship of Hari, he will surely incur the sin of a Brāhmaṇa-slaughter.

49-50. n the day of Hari, if he is weak in the body, how can he restrain (his enemies) ? It is from the food that the Prāṇa (vigour) is evolved. The activities of the body are based on the Prāṇas. The destruction of the enemy is through the activities of the body. If one is devoid of them, one is harassed and overpowered. I have realised this. Though I try to enlighten the king, he does not wake up, or realise it.

51. If the king protects his subjects that alone constitutes his Vrata. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, a king has no other holy Vrata (except this).

52. Of what avail are devotion and worship of gods to a king after spreading disaffection and wrath among his subjects staying in the realm. If there is no bloodshed in his kingdom that alone is on a par with Yajñas, Homas and services to gods.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The story of Mohini

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. On hearing the words uttered by Mohinī the Brāhmaṇas said—'True', and addressed these words to the king.

The Brāhmaṇas said :

2-3. O king, you have taken up the holy vow that food should not be taken in on the Ekādaśī day in both the fortnights (of every month). This vow is not taken from the point of view of the scriptural texts. It is evolved out of your own intellectual fancies. It has been laid down that those who maintain holy fires should take in (the food offered as oblation) during both the junctions of a day. (i.e. morning and evening.)

4. Three castes are glorified as the partakers of the leavings of Homas. Hence, how shall it be considered proper if they observe fast, particularly in the case of kings ?

5-6. The kings, O lord, are always up in arms. They are the persons who restrain the wicked. Whether with the backing of the scripture or without it, may the vow that you have taken up be concluded today through the words of the Brāhmaṇas. You will not incur (the sin of) breaking the holy vow. Eat in the company of the Brāhmaṇas.

7-8a. You need not regret or repent it. The words of a Brāhmaṇa are important (weightier) and valuable. O excellent

king, he who disregards the statements of a Brāhmaṇa takes birth as a Rākṣasa fifteen times.

8b-9a. On hearing those words the king became terribly furious but with throbbing lips, he spoke to the Brāhmaṇas in soft and bland speech.

9b-11. "O Brāhmaṇas, you are the guides for all living beings. You have cited a verse regarding ascetics and widows. But when you say that observance of fasts is not laid down for kings, it is but the opinion of those who traverse the wrong path and not that of the Vaiṣṇava persons. In that connection listen to the statements in the sacred text book "Vaiṣṇavācāralakṣaṇa" (or pertaining to the characteristics of the conduct of life of a devotee of Viṣṇu)—

12. "One shall not drink water by means of a conch shell; one shall not kill "tortoises" and "pigs", in both fortnights food should not be taken on the Ekādaśī day.

13. Liquor should not be drunk; nowhere should a Brāhmaṇa be killed; a knower of Dharma shall never play the game of dice; no one should take food on the day of Hari.

14. Eating of the forbidden food is sinful; violating the chastity of another man's wife is sinful; taking food on the Ekādaśī day is definitely the cause of downfall.

15. Should any one live for a hundred years after performing an action that should not be performed. Which active man takes food on the day of Hari ?

16. Fodder should not be given even to the quadrupeds on the day of Hari by the Brāhmaṇas staying in the northern region who are devoted to the holy rites of Viṣṇu (Vaiṣṇava rites).

17. How can I eat the forbidden food today ? I am not a man physically weak and feeble.[1] O excellent Brāhmaṇas, I am not afflicted by dyspepsia.

18-19a. How can I therefore eschew the holy vow merely at the instance of the Brahmaṇa following the wrong path. When

1. In VV. 17-20, the king is perfectly right on Śāstric grounds. (vide Manu XI. 30.) He hit the week point correctly in the arguments of Gautama and Mohini.

the whole earth is being protected by the king Dharmabhūṣaṇa (i.e. Dharmāṅgada) I am not without sufficient protection. I have no enemy.

19b-20a. After knowing all these things, O excellent Brāhmaṇas regularly practising the holy rites pertaining to Viṣṇu, it is not proper on your part to speak against me decrying my holy vow.

20b-21a. The Brāhmaṇas who observe (give) expiatory rites without carefully examining (the case) will incur sin due to the breaking (of injunctions of) the Smṛtis.

21b-23a. I will not take food on the day of Hari even if the following persons urge me to do it viz. — devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Rākṣasas, Siddhas, Brāhmaṇas, my own father himself, Hari, Hara, the father of Mohinī, the sun or any of the guardians of the world's quarters.

23b-25. O Brāhmaṇas, the king who is well-known on the Earth as Rukmāṅgada will never make his truthful pledge fruitless. Even the refulgence of the sun may vanish, even the Himālayas may crumble, even the ocean may dry up, even the fire may eschew its heat; still, O Brāhmaṇas, I will not break my Vrata on the day of Ekādaśī.[1]

26-28. O Brāhmaṇas, this is well-known in the three worlds. This is being proclaimed by the beating of drums —"Those who take food on the day of Hari, which is the most important of all Yajñas, which dispels sins, increases piety, bestows salvation which is called the severer of the chain of births, which is the receptacle of refulgence and is popular and established among all people in the villages and lands of Rukmāṅgada and others deserve to be killed or punished (otherwise) alongwith their sons. They will not be allowed to reside in the whole of the realm." When this has been announced loudly, if I were to take food, I would be committing a sin.

29-30a. It would be as though the drum was tarnished with filth or muffled with a blue cloth. The creature that has

1. VV. 21b-25 show the firm determination of Rukmāṅgada which acts as a challenge to Mohinī to demand the head of his only son Dharmāṅgada.

earned renown but spoils it by itself committing sin due to the fear of life stays in the hell called Kṛmidaṁśa for sixty Yugas.

30b-31a. As soon as I break my solemn vow of the holy rite, the delivery of my mother would be futile; the Brāhmaṇas, the Pitṛs and the Devas would be disappointed and Vaivasvata (Yama) would be delighted alongwith his scribe namely Citragupta.

31b-32. Of what avail is the birth of that evil-minded being who delights the beautiful wives of his enemies (by refraining from killing their husbands). He takes delight in sins by means of evil actions; he is no better than a man of low caste; he is the destroyer of every thing. He is unclean and foolish. He does not have regard for the Vedas, Purāṇas and scriptures. In the end, he goes to the city of the son of the Lord of the day (i.e. Yama).

33-34a. He who breaks his pledged word or solemn vow is no better than one who vomits his food and eats it again. Neither the Vedas, nor the scriptures, neither the good men nor the Purāṇas and Smṛtis advocate the act of taking food on the pure day worthy of holy rites pleasing to Mādhava.

34b-35. If Śrāddha is performed on the day of Hari, the Pitṛs will not be satisfied thereby. The Ekādaśī Vrata is one that bestows the region of Viṣṇu. Only foolish persons will mention it alongwith Kṣayāha (the new moon day when Śrāddha is to be performed).

36. On hearing his words Mohinī burned within herself. With eyes turned red with anger, she retorted to her husband :-

37. "If you do not act in accordance with my advice you will be out of the pale of Dharma. A man excluded from Dharma shall be no better than dust.

38-39. The dust, at least, fills a pit whereas this sinner of a man is the digger of a pit. O king, for the purpose of granting the boon you extended your hand and offered it to me (by way of taking a pledge). You have now broken that pledge. If you do not keep up that promise my responsibility is over. I shall go away, I have obtained your Dharma (i.e. you are deprived of it.)

40. I am not your beloved wife any more. O king, you are no longer my husband. I shall have my own arms as my head-rest and not yours; (even) in case of fighting (I shall not depend on your protection.)

41. Fie upon you the destroyer of piety, the breaker of your own promise. Even among the Mlecchas (alien outcastes) a heretic like you cannot be seen.

42. I will forsake you today since you have moved away from the truth sinfully." After saying this the fair lady hurriedly stood up.

43. Just as Satī went away leaving off Hara, so also the slender-bodied lady bedecked in divine ornaments started from there accompanied by those Brāhmaṇas.

44. "Better to touch liquor than have contact with this king. Better to wear the blue cloth, rather than have the touch of this king who has swerved from virtue."

45. Lamenting thus, the infuriated Mohinī cried much and went out of the abode accompanied by Gautama and others.

46. "O father, O Lord of the Universe, the cause of creation, maintenance and dissolution (of the worlds)," cried, the mentally created daughter of Brahmā.

47. In the meantime, Dharmāṅgada who was seated on an excellent horse returned to the palace after touring over the entire Earth.

48-49. Coming in a hurry, the renowned Prince Dharmāṅgada the son of Rukmāṅgada, a prince devoid of rivalry and favourite with his father, the very embodiment of virtue came face to face. The words coming out of the mouth of Mohinī, endorsed by the words of the Brāhmaṇas reached the ears of the prince.

50. Dismounting hurriedly from the horse, he went near his father and fell at his feet. Getting up again he bowed down to the leading Brāhmaṇas with palms joined together in reverence.

51-52. Then, observing that Mohinī was mentally furious and she was hurrying out, he went over to her and with folded palms, he said to her in reverence. "O Mother, O

gentle lady, O beloved wife of my father, by whom have you been insulted ? Why are you angry ? Where have you set off now alongwith these Brāhmaṇas ?"

53. On hearing the words of Dharmāṅgada, Mohinī spoke these words :

"O dear son, your father is a liar. Falsely did he offer his (right) hand (to me).

54-55. The hand that always performed holy rites, has the shape and features of red Aśoka tree, the glorious right hand wearing gold armlet and is marked with lines in the form of a banner and a goad is by your father Rukmāṅgada withdrawn—Hence I am not enthused to stay here."

Dharmāṅgada said :

56. O gentle lady, whatever you say, I shall do. There is no doubt about it. O mother, do not be angry. O beloved wife of my father, return.

Mohini said :

57. By this father of yours, I have been made his wife on the mountain Mandara with this (certain) stipulation: Śiva, the Lord of the Devas, was standing witness thereof.

58. Your father, Rukmāṅgada, has gone astray breaking those stipulations. He does not give me what should be given to me. It is not his flourishing prosperity that I am thinking about.

59. O prince, I do not beg for gold, nor for foodgrains nor for horse, elephants, villages nor clothes whereby he might incur any loss.

60. O foremost one among embodied beings, O son, only that was requested for by me whereby he could please his own body. But out of delusion, he does not give it to me.

61. O prince, the excellent king was requested for by me to help his own body for his own happiness.

62. The Lord has now landed himself in a terrible mess of falsehood on a par with imbibing liquor.

63. I will have to forsake your father who has fallen off from truthfulness, who speaks harsh words, has eschewed

and is false, roguish and base. My stay alongwith him is impossible.

64. On hearing the words of Mohinī, the son Dharmāṅgada said :

"As long as I am alive, my father cannot be false in respect of anything.

65. O fair lady, return. I shall do whatever is desired by you. O gentle lady no falsehood has ever been uttered before by my father.

66-67. How can that king speak falsehood, now that I his son, am here ? The whole world consisting of the Devas, Asuras and human beings is established in his truthfulness; the abode of Vaivasvata (Yama) has been made void of sinners and cleared of sinners by him. His fame spreads everywhere. The whole sphere of the Cosmic egg has been pervaded by his fame.

68. How can that king get involved in false utterances. I have not heard my father's words. How can I believe in an indirect (reported) statement (said to have been uttered in my absence) ?

69-70. O splendid-faced lady, take mercy on me and return."

On hearing these words of Dharmāṅgada, O king, Mohinī returned with (her hands) resting on the shoulders of her son to the place where Rukmāṅgada, as refulgent as the sun, was lying down as though dead.

71-72. She made her son sit on the bed of Rukmāṅgada which was equipped with gold, was brightly illuminated by gemset lamps, and decorated in variegated forms by corals; its extremely tender (soft-looking) legs were fashioned out of adamantine jewels. It was long and wide and charming beyond comparison.

73-75. With palms joined in reverence, he spoke to his father with bland speech. "O dear father, this mother of of mine, here says that you are a liar. How can you be, O king, a liar on this Earth ? When the kingdom consisting of the treasury hoarded with gems, possessing elephants, horses, chariots, etc., extending over the whole world containing the

seven oceans is being ruled by you, O Lord, give everything to her, everything whatever has been promised to her.

76. O dear father, as long as I hold the bow who can act against you ? Give even the post of Indra to the gentle lady. Know that Indra has been defeated.

77. The region of Brahmā, which is difficult of access, is unsullied and can be approached only by Yogins. I am willing to give that too to her after propitiating the lotus-deity born by means of penance.

78. After conquering human beings, Devas and Dānavas, I will give whatever my mother wishes for in the nether worlds, on the Earth, in the heaven or in any other region.

79. O king, since I am your slave, I may even be sold. If I am considered insignificant, may I be entrusted to a sinful Cāṇḍāla.[1] I shall be his servant and be fed by him.

Or

79. O king, since I am your slave, sell me or my mother and propitiate the daughter of Kuśa-emblemed deity (i.e. Brahmā) lest there should be, O Lord of men, the (stigma) of falsehood on you in the world.

80. O Lord of the Earth, there is nothing in the three worlds, which is difficult for me to do and which hence cannot be given to her, should she like it. O leading king, give her even my life or that of my mother.

81. O Lord of kings, by that very thing, be endowed with good renown for ever. You can illuminate the groups of kings with your attributes (like the moon) that brightens the sky by means of its rays.

82. It is true what Manu has said that there will be sin in the destruction of one's reputation as killing of one's own progeny (or the subjects). But O king, how can I otherwise, wipe off the pure (stainless) fame and be happy ? Hence this course is proper.

1. This is an obvious reference to king Hariścandra who for sage Viśvāmitra sold his wife and son to stick to the truth.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The story of Mohini

The king said :

1. O son, may my fame perish. May I be called a liar. May I even fall into a terrible hell. But how should I take food on the day of Hari ?

2-3. O son, let this gentle lady, Mohinī go to the abode of Brahmā. This lady says to me foolishly and childishly for many times. "Excepting your taking food on the day of Hari that is destructive of sins, I do not wish for anything else such as kingdom, Earth, wealth, etc."

4. Even If I am to be born in the despicable species of a germ, I will not take food on the day of Hari.

5. This Dundubhī (drum) has loudly proclaimed (my views) and has instructed the people. How can it be made false ?

6. Is it desirable to live for a hundred years after taking the forbidden food, after approaching a forbidden woman and after drinking the prohibited beverage ?

7. Even if I were charged with falsehood and have strayed away from the royal policy and am insulted and rebuked by the people, I will not take food on the day of Hari.

8. Even if I were to die due to the separation from the lady of tremulous side-glances, that is preferable, but I will never take food on the day of Hari.

9. How can I give excessive delight to Yama by making the miserable men proceed alongwith the path leading to hell ?

10. O dear son, the rows of hell which had been made empty by me, will be filled with people if I take food.

11. Let not any lady bear in her womb such a son as would cause delight to the enemies though he is efficient enough to destroy them.

12. She requests only for this viz : taking food on the day of Viṣṇu. I shall not grant the request of Mohinī even if I am requested for it by the Devas and Asuras.

13-14. He may even drink poison, he may enter fire, he may jump down from a lofty mountain; he may cut off his head with an excellent sword that brightens the sky; but king Rukmāṅgada will never take food on the day of Hari, on this Earth. My name Rukmāṅgada is famous in the three worlds.

15. How can I, by taking food on the Ekādaśī day, destroy the reputation earned by me—accumulated by me through the observance of fast on the Ekādaśī day.

16. Even if it dies, goes off, falls down, perishes, breaks into pieces, my heart shall not desist from this for the sake of Mohinī.

17. I may even forsake my life alongwith the worlds, my wives and servants. But I will never resort to the taking of food on the auspicious day of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

*The story of Kāṣṭhilā**

Vasiṣṭha said :

1-2. On hearing the words of his father, the son Dharmāṅgada called his mother named Sandhyāvalī who was auspicious, lustrous like ten thousand suns, of beautiful breasts and who protected the entire earth by the pacing of her steps over it.

3. At the instance of her son, she immediately reached the presence of the king. The words of Mohinī as well as those of his father were repeated to her.

4-5. Get an agreement effected between these two—console Mohini who tenaciously clings to (the stipulation of)

*Standard dictionaries like SKD, MW, give a 'plantain tree" as the meaning of *Kāṣṭhilā* but the story shows it to be a worm in the wood.

taking food by the king on the day of Hari. Let something be done so that my father does not swerve from truth and also does not take food. Let there be happiness to both.

6. O king, (Māndhātā), on hearing the words of her son the gentle lady Sandhyāvalī spoke these soft words to Mohinī, the daughter of Brahmā :

7. O beautiful lady, do not be importunate. By no means will the king taste the sinful food (cooked rice when the day of Hari has arrived.

8-9a. Closely follow the king. He is the eternal preceptor. Just as the worlds of Sāvitrī were free from impurities, so also will be the worlds of that woman who always carries out the directions of her husband.

9b-10a. O gentle lady, formerly, he was overwhelmed by passion and beguiled. If then, he had offered his hand to you, on the mountain, that should not be thought much of (no capital be made out of it). He does give what should not be given. Do not beg for what should not be given.

10b-12. Even an adversity is beneficent to one who strictly adheres to the path of the good. O blessed lady, even during his boyhood, food has not been taken by him during the day of Hari. How will he then take food now on the day of Viṣṇu (Ekādaśī). O lady of sweet and charming thighs, you may very well choose some other boon for something rare.

13-14. The king will definitely give it to you. Desist from the insistence on the taking of food. If you are convinced, O gentle lady, that it was I who brought up Dharmāṅgada, choose the kingdom alongwith our own lives, O lady of auspicious holy rites. (Choose the entire worlds) consisting of seven continents and many rivers, forests and mountains.

15. O lady of large eyes, and slender waist, for the sake of my husband I shall bow down to your feet though I am the eldest and you are the youngest.

16. The woman who traps and gets her husband involved in the faults due to the verbal pledge and makes him do what should not be done is sinful and she will stay in the hell.

17. After falling off from the terrible hell, she takes

twelve successive births as a sow. Thereafter, she is born as a Cāṇḍālī.

18. It is after knowing this aberration resulting from sins, that O gentle lady, O lady of beautiful thighs, O charming lady, you have been prevented by me with the feelings of a dear friend.

19. Good counsel must be given to an enemy by one who wishes for piety. What then, O lotus-faced lady to you who remains as a friend of mine ?

20. On hearing the words of Sandhyāvalī, Mohinī the fascinating lady spoke to the eldest wife of her husband whose complexion was lustrous like gold.

21-22. Mohinī said—"O lady of beautiful eyebrows, you are worthy of being honoured by me. I shall carry out your instructions. If the king does not wish to do what is being sung about by Nārada and other scholarly sages, viz taking food on the day of Hari, O gentle lady, may another thing, greater than your death, (?) be pursued.

23. O blessed lady, this is indeed painful to me also, but I prattle thus, thanks to divine intercession. Who likes self-slaughter? Who desires to swallow poison ?

24. Who wishes to fall down from the top of a mountain ? Who wants to play with snakes living in burrows ? Who likes to rush at lions and tigers ? Who wants to swim across the sea ?

25. Who wants to indulge in harsh words and false statements ? Who is fond of outraging the modesty of another man's wife ? Who likes to eat unwholesome food ? Who desires to eat the forbidden food in the world ?

26-27. Who wants to go hunting deer ? Who likes to play the game of dice ? Who likes to enter into risky adventure? Who wants all these such as cutting of grass and hewing of wood; trampling and holding of clods of earth, harassing of minor deities* (?), playing in water or with fire and similar things ? Yet O beautiful lady, urged by the deity (or Fate) a man does all these things.

*In the reading *dehānām* instead of *devānām*, it means "minor beings (such as poor worms, etc.)

28. A man who deserves to be in the hell, does all inauspicious things that destroy his body in the form of fame and that make him fall off from the three aims of life.

29-31. I am naturally sinful and wicked in my evil[1] actions. I am desirous of saying extremely harsh words. The child is born with the same emotions and feelings as the progenitor has at the time of discharging semen into the vaginal passage. I have been created by the lotusborn deity Brahmā who had his emotions disturbed by arguments against king Rukmāṅgada. I have the form of a fair-complexioned lady but defiled in emotions. I shall be the perpetrator of some evil action in regard to the king.

32-34. O gentle lady, it is neither the Lagna nor the planet, nor the Horā (the hour, the rising of the zodiacal sign) that can indicate the future nature. The emotional feeling at that time (i.e. the time of conception) should be taken up (for consideration) The son is also born with the same emotion. In a son born with that ill feeling, there is no courtesy or kindness, there is neither shame nor affection nor any Dharma (piety) also, O gentle lady. In spite of his knowledge about his evil tendencies he pursues the same feelings.

35. I am going to say something that will take away your life, that of our husband and that of all women folk alongwith the world. It spoils my merits (dharma) and may cause slander against me. O timid lady, it is impossible to conceive mentally about it.

36. If you do according to my suggestion, your fame in the world will be great. It will cause the fame of your husband to spread; it is conducive to the attainment of heaven; your son will be praised and thereby my lot will be controversial and full of condemnation.

Vasiṣṭha said :

37. O Lord, on hearing the words of Mohini the gentle lady Sandhyāvalī (screwed up all her courage) and urged that young woman saying "Tell me, Tell me"[1].

1. This sinister confession of Mohini—the pangs of conscience (whether sincere or hypocritical) prepares the tense background for the terrible catastrophe which is impending.

38. "Of what nature are the words you are going to speak which will cause sorrow to me ? In making my husband truthful, misery cannot be caused to me by any means. If it is done for the name of my husband, I am not distressed at my death, or at the death of my son or at the destruction of my kingdom.

39. If the wife is affluent but sinful, and hence, O fair-complexioned lady, the husband is miserable (it is proclaimed that) she will have a downfall (in hell).

40. That sinful lady falls into hell called Pūya (of foetid things) and remains there for seventy Yugas. Thereafter, she is born as female musk-rat in the Bhārata land for seven births.

41-42. Then she is born as a female crow and then a female jackal* and mungoose. After taking the birth of a cow, she becomes purified. O beautiful lady, she who does not give wealth she possesses or her own life for the sake of her husband, is born as a worm in the faeces. O splendid lady, after being released from the womb of a worm, she is born as a Kāṣṭhīlā[1] (plantain tree ?)

43. This happened during my girlhood days. A splitter of wood at my father's place was chopping the wood for fuel for a long time.

44. Inclined to play alongwith my girl friends, I went near him as he was splitting the wood.

45-46. O lady of fair eyebrows, there a worm was seen by me coming from between the wood. Its body resembled butter and it had the lustre of collyrium. It had the length of the little finger and the thickness of a finger. On seeing it fallen on the ground, a crow came there to peck at it.

47. Even as the hungry crow was about to peck at it with its beak, it was prevented by me instantaneously with a lump of clay.

*Śyāli is a hyper-Sanskritisation of Pkt. *Siyāli*. SK. Śṛgālī.

1. A Prakritic formation in Sk. meaning "one who lives in a log of wood (*kāṣṭha*)".

48. O fair lady, it was let off by the crow that was thus hit; but it had been pecked at by the beak and wounded. It was not able to run away.

49. It began to tremble. It was about to die. But sprinkled with water a little, it regained its normal health.

50. Then O fair-complexioned lady, the Kāṣṭhīlā spoke to me in human voice. She addressed me by my name Sandhyāvalī, while I was in the midst of my friends.

51. "O splendid-faced lady in my previous birth I was the daughter of the sage named Sumantu who was omniscient. I was the wife of Kauṇḍinya.

52. I lived in Kānyakubja (Kanauj in U.P.). I was affluent, hence, very arrogant. I was the favourite darling of my mother, father and other kinsmen.

53. Then I was given in marriage to the noble-souled Kauṇḍinya who was born of a noble family, was celibate (lit. who had no physical contact with any other women) and befitting me in every respect.

54. Bed and other things were given to me by my father as dowry and present. Ten thousand gold pieces too were given to me at the outset by my father-in-law.

55. I was fully satisfied with the wealth obtained from my father as well as father-in-law. I had cows, buffaloes etc. I was endowed with affluence (wealth) and foodgrains.

56. I was liked by my parents-in-law and the common people, on account of my good conduct. In due course of time, my father-in-law, the knower of the real meaning of the Vedic texts, passed away.

57. Taking the dead body of her husband my mother-in-law entered the funeral pyre. Thereafter, my husband offered water libations to his parents and performed their Śrāddha.

58. Within two months of that, O gentle lady, my husband went to the Royal palace out of curiosity but was afterwards overwhelmed by love passions of the heart.

59. Beautiful courtesans in the prime of their youth were seen entering the royal palace by that Brāhmaṇa.

60. With gifts of profuse wealth two of them were taken from there and brought to his house. My evil-minded husband retained them in his house for dalliance.

61. Using it up the entire wealth of my husband was wasted by both of them. O gentle lady, by the time three years elapsed, my husband became indigent.

62. Then he requested me "Give me your ornaments". Those were not given to my husband by me as he was addicted to vice.

63-65. O blessed lady, I took everything and went to my father's abode. (He too followed me there). At my house he sold the slaves and other possessions and the money (received thereby) was given to the two courtesans. That also was exhausted. Whatever was left such as the fields, grains, etc. was sold off at throw-away-prices alongwith the garments, utensils and other personal effects. My husband thereupon entered the great ocean by means of a boat. He went oversea.

66. He went a long distance seeing wonderful things and miracles on the way. O splendid lady, he saw many animals of the sea and all their activities.

67. By the time it had gone a hundred Yojanas, the boat was caught in a violent storm. It broke into pieces and all others on the boat were killed.

68-69a. As providence would have it, and urged by his Karmans of the previous births, my husband clung to a long piece of wood. O gentle lady, led by the wind he reached a mountain bedecked with adamantine peaks.

69b-70. That mountain contained many rivulets and fountains, many birds and many trees full of fruits and flowers. With its three prominent peaks, it scraped the middle of the sky.

71. O lady of beautiful eyes, on seeing the divine, wonderfnl mountain my husbund left off the piece of wood (that brought him there) and jocously climbed on to it, as he was eager to earn some wealth.

72. He rested there for a while. When he was overwhelmed with hunger and thirst, he got up in search of food and surveyed the trees all round.

73-74. He saw ripe grape vines there and ate the grapes joyfully. He was a bit assuaged and he saw a very clean big Śāla tree with a thick shade and its thick foliage resembling the

spreading clouds, and had the height of fifty men. Spreading his upper cloth he went to sleep under its shade.

75. Overcome by fascinating sleep his eyes began to roll. By the time the sun had set the excessively tired (Brāhmaṇa) went to sleep.

76. When the sun had set and the night had set in, a terrible Rākṣasa roaring like the cloud came there rushing in.

77. Like the ten-headed Rāvaṇa who had abducted Sītā, he had carried the slender-limbed auspicious daughter of the ruler of Kāśī, named Ratnāvalī on his lap.

78. Without washing her feet, she had gone to sleep with her head directed towards the north. The virgin of beautiful buttocks was desirous of obtaining a husband, but did not obtain one befitting her.

79. That girl was the foremost among all women. Overwhelmed by slumber she was crying. In the matter of giving her in marriage, her father had been extremely anxious day and night.

80. O lady of slender limbs, this beautiful girl, occupying a bed spread in the shadow of the lamp was seen by the sinful demon who was roaming about.

81-83. He saw her in the light of gems and jewels that were shining like lamps. She was wearing two bangles well studded with bright gems and jewels. In each bangle there were ten jewels, and in the necklace of gold coin (?) there were fifteen jewels. On the crest, there were seven jewels. On the armlets there were eight and five (thirteen) jewels. The demon abducted such a virgin bedecked in jewels and with gold-like lustrous complexion. He carried away the girl of sweet smiles from the palace of the king. Through the aerial path he reached his own abode in a moment.

84-87. He came to that mountain where my husband (was sleeping) beneath the Śāla tree. There she saw his cave that had the lustre of gold. Unable to bear the terror struck by him, she entered the cave even as he was looking on. The cave had been beautified by many jewels and it had mansions of variegated colours. Many articles lay scattered here and

there. It contained beds and seats. Pots of beverages and edibles with various kinds of dishes had been kept there. After entering the cave, the demon placed that weeping girl of lily-like eyes, the excessively frightened girl of plump bosom and buttocks, on to a bed.

88. On hearing the weeping of the girl, his wife the ogress hurriedly came to the place where the demon was standing.

89. On seeing that girl whose lustre was like that of molten gold and everyone of whose limbs was beautiful, she became infuriated. Rebuking her husband she asked thus :

90. "O ruthless one, why is this girl brought here when I am alive ? Do you wish for another wife ? I will no longer be your wife then.

91. That demon joyously spoke to his beloved wife of beautiful eyes, the ogress of black eyes who had spoken to him thus.

92. "O splendid-faced lady, this pabulum (eatable) prey has been brought by me from Kāśī for your sake. A second one is standing at the gate. It has been brought to me by providence.

93. O fair-faced lady, a Brāhmaṇa is lying beneath the Śāla tree. Bring him here quickly so that I can make a meal of him.

94. On hearing the words of the Rākṣasa that virgin spoke thus :— "O Rākṣasī, out of his fear for you, your husband utters a lie.

95-96. He knows that you are old in age, hideous in form and torturous in your gait. At night when I was soundly sleeping in my father's house, he came to me passionately. O gentle lady, since I am not married he has brought me here to make me his wife in spite of my cries."

97. On hearing these words uttered by the princess, the ogress became extremely infuriated. On seeing the beautiful form (of the princess), she decided that it was the truth. In her anger she hurled words (at her husband).

98. She thought thus—"She has been brought here to be made his wife. Of necessity, this demon will strike a wedge in my head.

99. Let there not be any woman in the three worlds who undergoes the misery of having a co-wife. There will hardly be any woman in the three worlds who will survive the harassment due to the misery of being a co-wife.

100. There is no doubt about this that it is the greatest of all miseries when there is another woman to have a share in the wealth and enjoyment of pleasures."

101. After thinking much like this, she spoke these words to her husband, "This girl is mine, as this lady of charming eyes has been brought by you as food for me.

102-103a. I shall bring that Brāhmaṇa to be your prey, O Suvrata (one of holy rites)". Then the Rākṣasa urged "Go, go quickly. The corner of my mouth drips too much of saliva due to my desire to eat him."

103b-104. Thereafter, on hearing the words uttered by her husband, the terrible Rākṣasī set out with infinite hope. She saw the excellent Brāhmaṇa endowed with comely features and blooming youth as well as adorned with the jewels of learning.

105. On seeing him she was overwhelmed with love pangs in the heart. Through her Māyā (power of illusion), she became a beautiful maiden of sixteen years and approached him.

106. The maiden of large buttocks spoke to the Brāhmaṇa with great pleasure—"Who are you ? Whence have you come here ? Why do you stay here ?

107. I ask you this as I am desirous of making you my husband. I am an ogress overcome with pangs of love. I have been abandoned by my husband. I have come here to make you my husband."

108. On hearing her words my husband was frightened. O splendid lady, yet he emboldened himself. The intelligent (Brāhmaṇa) spoke these words :—

109. "O Ogress, how can there be the copulation of a Rākṣasī and a human being ? There is no doubt about this that men are remembered as the prey of Rākṣasas."

110. On hearing those words she spoke to him again respectfully—"The impossible is made possible, thanks to the intercession of the Providence.

111: This is heard in the Purāṇa. This is a future incident mentioned in the Bhārata, O Brāhmaṇa, Hiḍambā an ogress will become the wife of Bhīma.[1]

112. The son procreated by a human being will be Ghaṭotkaca. He will be one who cannot be killed by any other weapon. He will attain death through the weapon called Śakti (of Indra, hurled by Karṇa against Ghaṭotkaca).

113. Hence, O Brāhmaṇa, do not grieve. It is through Providential intercession that I have become your wife. Fate is indeed very powerful.

114-115. When Indra went to the mortal world to meet Bali, my husband, the terrible Rākṣasa had a convenient opportunity. He stole Śakti from his abode as though it were the blazing flame. And that Śakti belonging to Indra has been kept here in the Śāla Tree.

116. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, without killing at least one it does not go back to Indra. The person for whose slaying it was hurled will perish even if he be immortal.

117. Hence, I shall climb up to the top of this Śāla tree, bring the shining Śakti to you and hand it over to you with a desire for the death of my husband.

118. If you do not hit and injure the night-prowler with this Śakti, there is no doubt that the evil-minded one will swallow you as well as me.

119. He is a great enemy of yours as well as that of me, O scorcher of enemies, since, by that foolish fellow, a virgin has been brought here for being made his wife.

120. Hence, an enmity (inimical feelings) has been generated in me against my husband of the wicked soul. If he is killed, it will be possible for both of us to have sexual dalliance.

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1. The future tense in VV. 111 and 112 regarding Bhima's marriage with Hiḍambā and the birth of their son Ghaṭotkaca and his death by a Śakti in the Bhārata war is used to show that this Kāṣṭhilā incident (esp. her previous birth) is more ancient than the Mahābhārata-history (mentioned only as *Bhārata* in the N.P.).

121. O Rativardhana (one who intensifies, lustfulness) if I am making a false statement to you, may I not be the partaker of benefits of the merit performed by myself.

122. If this were to be a lie, may I attain that condition of a despicable nature which is attained by men on committing Brāhmaṇa slaughter.

123. O Brāhmaṇa, may I get that state, the terrible state that is laid down in the case of an evil-minded Brāhmaṇa who drinks liquor.

124. By uttering a lie, may I attain that fate, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, of that creature that is engaged in seducing the preceptor's wife and that resorts to sinful actions.

125-126. If I tell a lie, may I incur that sin which the following undergo viz :—he who steals gold and misappropriates the sum given on trust; he who forcibly occupies another man's land; he who commits suicide; he who eats meat on the Pañcamī (fifth) and Aṣṭamī (eighth) day, of a lunar fortnight.

127. The man who commits the sin of cutting off a tree or cohabiting with a woman on the new moon day, the sin acquired by taking in ghee while one is defiled by Ucchiṣṭa, the sin of sexual intercourse during the day time.

128. The householder Brāhmaṇa who does not perform the holy rite of Vaiśvadeva, the person who does not give alms to the mendicant, the widow who takes meal twice a day.[1]

129. The person who uses gingelly oil on the day of Saṁkrānti (the transit of the sun from one sign of Zodiac to another), the person who goes to the holy centre along with the cows (?), the person who takes bath in another man's tank without taking out mud therefrom.

130. The person who chews the tooth stick twig from a forbidden tree; the person who does not serve cows, but binds them; the person who treads the heretic's path.

1. Formerly, widows were looked upon as Yatis and all the restrictions of a Sannyāsin were imposed on them. Hence this restriction of limiting to one meal for widows.

131. The person who performs the worship of the Pitṛs and the Devas standing on a piece of wood or rock (?), the person who keeps only a buffalo without a cow also, the person who takes food off a bell metal vessel that is broken.

132. The person who performs holy rites clad in unwashed or torn clothes or those belonging to others. The person who stares at a naked woman and the person who partakes of forbidden food.

133. O Brāhmaṇa, if I tell you a lie, may I be tarnished with the same sin as that of a person who creates obstacles in the discourse about Śrīharī.

134. O Brāhmaṇa, if I tell a lie, may I be the person who incurs all these sins[1] that I have mentioned and also those I have not mentioned."

135. O gentle lady, my husband who was thus addressed by that sinful woman was deluded by the inevitable future, and he decided accordingly, saying "So be it."

136. That indigent Brāhmaṇa who had been indulging in vices and so perturbed extremely due to my harsh words spoke thus to the ogress. His words (proved to be) the bestower of all achievements.

137. "Bring that Śakti quickly. I shall carry out your directions. When the Rākṣasa is killed, all these things should be given by you to me.

138-139a It is with a keen desire for wealth that I undertook (the voyage) through the sea full of whales and sharks". On hearing these words, the ogress brought the Śakti that was on the top of the tree and that emitted brilliant lustre. She gave it to my husband for the realisation of their desire.

139b-140. In the meantime, the Rākṣasa who was overwhelmed by passion attempted to rape the virgin. She became terrified and spoke these words—"O Rākṣasa, there is a great sin in cohabiting with a virgin.

141. While I was sleeping I had been fraudulently brought here from my father's house at Kāśī. It is not your fault in this regard. My fate is evidently of this nature.

1. VV. 122-134 record a series of acts which were regarded as sins or undesirable ones in the elite Indian society of the NP-Period.

142. I am in the middle of a cave. Who will be the protector here ? It is through fate that one gets a husband. It is through fate that one gets a wife.

143. Fate alone plays the chief part in the matter of acquiring learning, house, happiness, wealth and nobility of birth. It is urged by the fate that man goes anywhere.

144. O night-prowler, of necessity you alone will be my husband. When the path is traced out by fate, what will (even) a scholar do ?

145. Hence bring that Brāhmaṇa who has resorted to that Śāla tree. Fetch ghee, water, Kuśa grass and fire. Celebrate marriage in accordance with the injunctions.

146. Even without the Darbha grass, water and fire, even without the traditional rites laid down, a marriage may be fruitful if it is blessed with the permissive statement of a Brāhmaṇa.

147. O Rākṣasa, if that Brāhmaṇa has not already been killed (bring him here quickly). When the holy rites of Homa have been performed, you will be able to eat him up.

148. When these words were addressed by that princess the Rākṣasa had full belief in his mind. He set out proudly.

149. Afflicted by pangs of love he hastened out to bring that Brāhmaṇa.

150. O gentle lady, as he was setting out he himself sneezed, his left eye throbbed and his own clothes dropped down.

151-153. Unmindful of everything, he set out from the cave. There he saw his wife in human form engaged in that form of union as is usual between a husband and a wife. She said— "I am abandoning you, a sinful Rākṣasa of ruthless action. You are enamoured of a young woman of human species. You are the defiler of my body." On hearing these terrible words uttered by his wife, the night-prowler (demon) became infuriated and malicious. He rushed at her.

154. He lifted up his arms. He kept his mouth wide open. He rushed at them to devour both of them. Uttering curses of harmful nature, he rushed at them like a violent storm, that blows in the proper season.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Kāṣṭhilā's story (Contd.)

Kāṣṭhilā said :

1. On seeing the Rākṣasa, comparable to the black annihilator Yama, rushing at them, the Ogress became afraid and spoke thus to my husband.

2. "Hurl this Śakti that is as refulgent as fire and bedecked in gold. May this husband of mine die and become the beloved of Digambara's enemy (i.e. Yama).

3. At her instance, my husband assumed great manliness and hurled the massive Śakti at the chest of the Rākṣasa.

4-5. The Śakti that blazed brilliantly like fire and illuminated the ten quarters, the point of which was sharp and emitted divine rays and was jingling with hundreds of tinkling bells fitted into it, the body of which was smeared with red sandal paste, and was beautified with (the covering) of red cloth. It went off from the hands of the Brāhmaṇa, pierced into the heart of the Rākṣasa.

6-7. After reducing the Rākṣasa to ashes, it went up into the sky. After felling (killing) her husband through the hands of the Brāhmaṇa, the ogress considered herself as having achieved her goal. Hairs stood on end due to her delight. The delighted ogress then spoke to the splendid-eyed Brāhmaṇa.

8. "O my lover, come on, Enter freely my beautiful cave. Enjoy all the great pleasures, divine as well as human, in my company."

9. "So be it" said my husband who was extremely delighted. Then she took my husband and entered her cave joyfully.

10. Without caring to look at the ashes to which her husband's body had been reduced, she clasped my husband with her protruding breasts.

11-12. She pointed out to him that maiden of slender body who was lying down on the bed.—"O excellent Brāhmaṇa, this lady of black side-glances, with lips red like the Bimba fruit and of gold-like lustrous complexion had been brought (by

my husband) to make her his wife, from Varanasi, the city whose limits are not transgressed by all sins.

13. That city is called Śakti Kṣetra (the sacred place of Divine Power) and is holy and destructive of sins. It is the abode of Tripurāri (God Śiva) and it extends to five Gavyūtis (i.e. fifteen Kilometers).

14. Men who die therein are never reborn into any womb. Kindly take this lady of bright eyes to her father's house.

15. These jewels, beds and seats are at your disposal. If you wish you can sell all these things including myself.

16. O Brāhmaṇa, for your sake the terrible Rākṣasa was slain by me who am enamoured of your comely features. He has been sent to the abode of Yama.

17. Hence, O Lord, have confidence in me. O large-eyed one, I am your devotee. I can assume any form I like. 'Enjoy me.'

18. O lady of beautiful eyes, on hearing these words of the love-lorn ogress, my husband spoke these words to the Rākṣasī in the presence of that virgin.

19. As he was guarded and suspicious he spoke sweet words—

"O blessed lady, (it is mentioned) in the treatises on polity and ethics that women should not be trusted.

20-21. How will she not injure me, she who kills her husband ever since her girlhood days ? Considering another man more handsome, this lascivious woman (may cause my death). O fair-faced lady, still I continue to believe in you.

22. O beautiful woman, I have sought refuge in you, kill me, if you please, to-day or tomorrow or after a fortnight or a month or a year.

23-24. This must be done by you only thus (as though) I have not helped you today (?) For the sake of vengeance (help in return ?) the soul must be offered by you. (You must give yourself up). Since you unhesitatingly killed your husband for my sake, O lady of good eyes, I do not say anything more."

25. On hearing the words of my husband, she spoke

thus : "O Brāhmaṇa, killing some one who has trusted in one is on a par with the slaughter of a Brāhmaṇa.

26. If, on account of this, you consider me a cruel Rākṣasī, the destroyer of her husband (my reply is) I hate my husband. How will I kill one who confides in me and believes in me?

27. The way of Dharma (virtue and piety) is very subtle. It cannot be understood by any means, by any one anywhere, whether Daitya or Rākṣasa or others. But some men are clever in thinking about the subtleties of Dharma.

28. (Those who know Dharma) attain Naiṣkarmya (freedom from the Karmans i.e. Mokṣa) through their perishable physical body. This is heard in the Purāṇas. Same thing is being mentioned here.

29. It is through the favourable nature of Dharma that Viṣṇu the powerful God could assume ten incarnations. But in them much misery was experienced by him.[1]

30. Where is Rāma, the abode of Śrī, who for the sake of Sītā, accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa lamented in the course of the events and they were bound by the serpentine nooses?

31. Where is Vasudeva's son, the lord of Devas, of the form of perfect knowledge ? And where is the fully worldly man who sheds tears saying "O what a pity ?" who makes signs and gestures with his eyes and who acts as servant unto Pārtha (i.e. Arjuna), Ugrasena and others ? (What a lot of difference there is !)

32. O Brāhmaṇa, the activities of the Lord are beyond human scrutiny[1] though he abides by the favourable Dharma. Vyāsa[2] the son of Parāśara, is himself the classifier of the Vedas. He was a man of truthful vision. His very form is worthy of being worshipped. (But) he was born of the semen virile of one who destroyed the virginity (of a woman). Hence he is called a Kānīna (son of an unmarried girl). Moreover, he had sexual intercourse with the wives of his younger brothers.[2]

1. VV. 29-47 give instances of *adharma* passed on as Dharma. The *Rākṣasī* describes the power of fate over all beings.

2. This refers to the births of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu from the queens of Vicitravirya, the son of Satyavatī and Śantanu. To have a heir

33. Śantanu was a Parivettṛ (one who had married before his elder brother Devāpi). He was the second husband of a lady (Satyavatī who married twice). At first he was the husband of the heavenly river. His son was the veritable Vasu (Bhīṣma), the unmarried elder brother (whose younger brother vicitra-Vīrya was married before him); he attained death due to the arguments of a woman (Ambā) who became Śikhaṇḍin in the next birth.

34. The Pāṇḍavas were born of adultery (as each was born from a different person other than their legal father Pāṇḍu. Thus they were actually bastards. All of them cohabited with the same woman, viz. Draupadī. Still their glorification is considered holy and sacred. It is destructive of sins.

35-37. Viṣṇu whom people meditate upon and truly remember, who is called Yogamūrti (Embodiment of Yoga) and who is eternal, was enamoured of courtesans. Śrinṛsiṁha who advised Prahlāda and others and who destroyed Asuras is considered as the deity and Lord of the Devas (Defective). He is the destroyer of even the impression of worldly existence, he is the deity and Lord of the Devas. He was the destroyer of Hiraṇyākṣa (Hiraṇyakaśipu ?) but he stayed in his abode (?)

38. The son of Jamadagni (Paraśurāma) had realised his soul himself. He had destroyed his sins by means of his austerities. He was Lord himself. But he was the perpetrator of such deeds as massacres of Kṣattriyas and killing of children in the womb.

39. He himself was a leading Yogin. He was a Brāhmaṇa engaged in educating people, but acting within the perview of Dharma, he became one who brought agony into the world.

40. Nārada was a Nārada (destroyer of groups of men)[1] again and again. Nārada was devoted to Nārāyaṇa. Nāra

to the Throne, Satyavati requested Vyāsa who was born of her from Parāśara, to have sons from the queens of his younger brother Vicitravirya. (*Mbh-Ādi*). 104 and 105).

1. These different connotations of *Nārada* are peculiar.

means one who is a benefactor of men and also one who is immortal.

41. Gautama was Gotama (most timid like a cow). O Brāhmaṇa, he was devoted to the activities of a cowherd. He had written a treatise (i.e. Nyāya sūtra) the topics of which are beyond the pale of the Vedas; (but he is called) one who helps the Vedas.

42-44a Vasiṣṭha and even Agastya, who were born of Urvaśī, are considered to be masters. By Vasiṣṭha a sacred treatise of excellent nature named Vasiṣṭhasmṛti had been composed for helping the whole world. In that work the Purāṇas and the Vedas are considered to be equal. He was himself the preceptor of Śrī Rāma who was none other than the Almighty (Viṣṇu). Why was he cursed by Gādhija (Viśvāmitra) ?[1] Why was he born in the womb of a lower animal ?[2]

44b-45a The powerful Agastya had overpowered the Vindhya mountain, the demon Vātāpi and also the ocean. How is he the receiver of hire money (?)[2] He served in the way that is difficult for others to do.

45b-46a. The creator is worthy of being worshipped by the sun etc. and is the honourable grandsire of the world. How did he become enamoured of a lady of fascinating beauty and give up his body ?

46b-47a. God Śiva, the bestower of auspicious things, is the lord of Prakṛti. He is greater than the greatest. How did he carnally approach the wives of the Devas ? How does he pursue inauspicious activities in the cremation ground ?

47b-48. Hence, O Brāhmaṇa, it is the prescribed rule that good conduct must be pursued duly. He who is the foremost among the knowers of things shall not abandon good conduct by having the egotist feeling, (then) he will obtain the highest peace conducive to virtue here and hereafter.

1. When Vasiṣṭha learnt how Viśvāmitra persecuted his patron-disciple Hariścandra, he cursed Viśvāmitra to be a stork. In retaliation Viśvāmitra cursed him to be a kingfisher. (DB. VI. 13. 34-47).

2. This refers to Agastya's employment as a bearer of the palanquin of Nahuṣa while he was in the position of Indra. Agastya however cursed Nabuṣa who was then transformed into a serpent.
Mbh. *Udyoga* ch. 17; *Śānti* 342-51.

49. Dharma is remembered as conducive to Apavarga (salvation). Wealth is the only thing through which Dharma can be achieved. That Dharma I have achieved in the form of wealth that is the greatest of all.

50-51. O Brāhmaṇa, listen. In this connection, I shall recount to you the subtle way of Dharma. Abducting a girl, my husband was coming this way. He saw you were involved because you were brought there by your Karman. That was not his fault. He was asked by me—"Why was this girl brought ?"

52-53. Then a lie was uttered by him that it was for his food. On hearing that, the girl in bondage told me everything pointing out his desire. Those who say that in wedded life the wife is a hindrance to salvation, cannot be understood as knowers of reality. Since the wife is not an obstacle.

54. Only she is the real wife who is able to uplift a husband falling into the hell. Any other woman is like a twining creeper of Karman, the bestower of worldly bondage.

55. What is sinful in this you hear from me, O my bridegroom who have come to me by yourself. Even if the vital breaths come to the throat, falsehood should not be uttered.

56. One must always be truthful. Dharma is directly based on Truth. God Brahmā is based on Truth. All good men abide by Truth.

57. The entire universe is established in the Truth, the universe consisting of the mobile and the immobile beings is always based on Truth. The words "One shall always speak the Truth"[1] are proclaimed in the Vedāntas.

58. The Truth is of the form of Brahman. We call Brahman by the word Truth. O Brāhmaṇa, the Truth is always auspicious. It is the bestower of everything that is auspicious.

59. Untruth is the bestower of self destruction though immediately it may breed the confidence of belief. But

1. In various Upaniṣads such commandments are found e.g. Taittiriya I. 11.1, Kauṣitaki 1.6.

Truth should not be spoken to women. Listen to the reason thereof.

60. In such directives as "Do not reveal to the woman (the extent of) the treasury", it prevents future faults. That is said to be the cause of Dharma which reveals the subtlety of Dharma.

61. That is called wedded life where the witnesses of marriage had been Kuśa grass, Brāhmaṇas, water, fire, Vedas, Earth, time, space and Devas.

62. The rite of acceptance is laid down in the celebration of marriage. If the woman and the man are consecrated by Brāhmaṇas, they are regarded as the teacher and the disciple.

63. Hence, the bride and the bridegroom are mutually related as teachers and disciples. No difference at all, even to the minutest extent, should be understood by a discriminating man as existing between these two.

64. The importance of women and employees is in accordance with the difference in rites. If there is the defect of contrariety (in relations etc.) anywhere, the cause of it is fate alone.

65-66. The entire universe consisting of gods, Asuras, and human beings is subservient to Fate. Fate is the accumulation of impressions of Karmas in the previous births. He who enjoys and experiences whatever comes to his lot, whether auspicious or inauspicious and behaves spontaneously with both, is called a quiescent person by the learned knowledgeable men.

67. A quiet person whose activity is based on the Truth enables the world to cross mundane existence. It is by knowing such and other details that my husband was prevented from falling into hell.

68. He was sanctified by me by preventing him from committing the sin of violating virginity. That is the help rendered by me. He has now attained the goal of the virtuous and lucky men after having been struck down by you.

69. My husband was helped by me who know the subtlety of Dharma. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I have acquired merit (Dharma) in saving your life.

70-71a. What has been achieved by that Dharma? Know it properly from me. I who am born in the species of an ogress, I who have been the wife of a Rākṣasa, have now become a Brāhmaṇa woman who can assume any form, the reason being Dharma.

71b-72. Dharma is the wish-yielding cow (Kāmadhenu). Satisfaction is the heavenly Nandana park. Vidyā is the cause of salvation and Tṛṣṇā (insatiable thirst) is the river Vaitaraṇī. My husband who was about to fall into Vaitaraṇī has been redeemed by me.

73. O Brāhmaṇa, I have helped this fair-faced girl also because she has been placed near a person who is the highest of all castes. She will be your wife in her father's house.

74-75. I will be guarding her and you for ever enlightening you with Dharma. Before my contact you had a wife, O Brāhmaṇa, who will be born as a being in lower animal species. Later on, as a result of my blessings, she will be released.

76. O Brāhmaṇa, in my previous birth I was the most beautiful woman in the world well-known as Kandalī. I was the daughter of the sage Aurva.

77. By the power of penance I was born as one of a twin. My brother born along with me, was suppressed by Aurva himself for the cause of Dharma.

78-79. I was educated and given in marriage to Durvāsas. O leading Brāhmaṇa, it was a result of my previous Karman that I attained him as my husband. I quarrelled with my husband. Hence, I was cursed by him and reduced to ashes. As a little of my sins remained, I was born as ogress.

80. In that birth this brilliant leader of demons Gobhila was attained by me as my husband but he has been struck down by you.

81. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, in his youth he had incurred a curse "Your death will be initiated by your wife on account of a certain princess."

82. As a result of my previous Karman, I have been bereft of the nature of an ogress. Being powerful on account of the auspicious actions, I become your helpmate.

83. At the outset my husband abducted a virgin and I

had been made miserable by him. Hence, O Brāhmaṇa, he has been killed by me.

84. O lover, since you put trust in me with all your heart and soul in every respect I shall protect you in every respect.

85. This is my binding by oath with five elements as my witness and uttered in the presence of the all-pervading person. It is the truth.

86. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, you will not alter this agreement in any respect. O bestower of honour, you must abide by me in all activities."

87. On hearing the words uttered by the ogress, the noble Brāhmaṇa carried out all instructions and she did accordingly.

88-89. Thereafter, the demoness gathered together all wealth from the cave. She assumed the form of a she-elephant and kept my husband on her back along with Ratnāvalī, the large-eyed girl. Joyously she went through the path of firmament, O lady of good eyes, towards Kāśī.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

The description of Kāśi

Kāṣṭhilā said :

1. Thus, O lady of beautiful eyebrows, that ogress who had assumed the form of a she-elephant, reached the temple of Viśveśa at Kāśī within three Muhūrtas.

2. On reaching that city, the lady of black eyes spoke to her husband—"O Lord, this (city) is glorified as the axe for the cutting of the tree of sin.

3. O beloved, this is said to be the dice box for the gold of six types of distresses (?) It is destructive of all seeds of Karmans, and it is the bestower of salvation on all.

4. The Purāṇas say that it was at first the abode of Viṣṇu.[1] No one can ever have salvation in a holy centre not belonging to Viṣṇu.

5. O excellant Brāhmaṇa, this was formerly a city of Viṣṇu, the bestower of salvation on all creatures and the destroyer of every one's sin.

6. Once Lord Śaṅkara went there to see Pitāmaha (god Brahmā) the sole creator of all worlds, shining with his own splendour.

7. After going there, Mahādeva bowed down to Brahmā the preceptor of the worlds. He stood in front of him listening to the recital of the Vedic lore.

8. He was delighted on seeing the Lord of the Universe joyously reciting the four Vedas by means of the four wonderful faces.

9. Thereafter, the leader of goblins saw the fifth face of Brahmā. On observing him to be impudent and arrogant, he became malicious instantaneously.

10. O leading Brāhmaṇa, the three-eyed deity, born of anger could not brook his audacity. Hence with the tip of his nail he cut off the head stationed above in the firmament (?)

11. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the head of Brahmā that had been severed, stuck up to the sproutlike left hand (of Śiva). It did not fall off though shaken frequently.

12. Brahmā became sad. He stood there staring at Śiva. Śiva became ashamed and he hurriedly went out of the place.

13. Though he tried in many ways impatiently to cast off that head, he could not get rid of it. It was a great mystery.

14. Being perturbed and worried he remembered Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-emblemed deity. The moment he was remembered, Viṣṇu manifested himself.

1. The claim that Kāśi was originally an abode of Viṣṇu and that Śiva begged of him to give that place to himself as a permanent residence as a protection against *Brahma-hatyā* is a Vaiṣṇavite tilt in the NP. The assertion that liberation in sacred place is possible only if it is presided over by Viṣṇu is a part of sectarian propaganda. It is also an explanation why a particular Tīrtha at Kāśi was called Kapāla-mocana.

15. O Brāhmaṇa, on seeing the omnipresent Viṣṇu the Lord of the chiefs of the Devas, the bull-emblemed deity who had turned pale became humble and bent down his head.

16. On seeing (Śiva) the antagonist of Brahmā, sick and frightened, Hari consoled him and spoke these words that made him satisfied.

17. "Inasmuch as the head of Brahmā had been cut off, O Śambhu, the omniscient one, you have committed a sin. Experience the fruit thereof for a short while.

18. O beloved one, a Karman performed by one, whether auspicious or inauspicious will yield its fruit which one must, of necessity, experience. Even if hundreds of births are to be taken, a Karman does not perish without being experienced.

19. What can I do ? Where shall I go ? On seeing you miserable, O Śambhu, at the sight of your misery, my Prāṇas are agitated and dispirited.

20. It is my opinion that even the most heinous of all great sins are not equal to Brāhmaṇa-slaughter.

21. You are the preceptor of the whole world. You are the instructor in Dharma. But, overpowered by the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter you are incapable of remaining quiet even for a moment.

22. This extremely terrible Hatyā (the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter) emits fish odour; she is senile and sick; she has put out her tongue. O Lord of Devas ! She is running after you to catch you.

23. Hence you must not stay in any single place for a while. For the sake of your benefit you have to be wandering (continuously) for twelve years, with the desire for the destruction of sins.

24-25. You must wander for twelve years with the skull, begging for alms, washing your left hand in the holy rivers and tanks. Then, O Lord of the Devas you will become pure and be liberated from this sin." O Brāhmaṇa, on being advised thus by Viṣṇu, Śiva went over all the places.

26. In order to get rid of the skull he washed his left hand in every sacred water. Wandering thus for three years he reached the penance grove of Badarikāśrama.

27. O bestower of honour, for the sake of alms he stood at the threshold of Dharmaputra,[1] the lord of the Devas and repeatedly said—"Viṣṇu, give me alms."

28. On seeing Śiva stationed at the threshold, Lord Nārāyaṇa said—"Take the alms". After saying this he offered his right hand.

29. On seeing Hari attempting to give the alms, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, Śiva struck his right hand with his trident.

30-33. Through the three wounds inflicted by (the three points of) the trident, three streamlike jets came out. They were terrifying to the worlds. They had different colours; they were twelve Hastas high. One of the streams was of blood. It fell on the skull. The second, a milky stream, reached his face; the third, a stream of water came up to Śiva in front of him, for the sake of saving Śiva. Śiva resorted to these three streams in accordance with the injunctions for the duration of three years. Becoming a little delighted, O Brāhmaṇa, he went to the holy centre of Kurukṣetra. Having gone there, he became a pillar and fell down.

34. In the holy centre of Brahma-hrada, he lay immersed in the waters of Brahmahrada. When a period of three years had elapsed he came out with half of his body wounded (?)

35. He eulogised Viṣṇu the Lord of the Devas, abiding in the cavity of the heart of everyone, for a long time. Then the Lord of the Universe who was pleased with him granted him the boon.

36-38. "O Hara, after wandering over many holy centres go to Kāśī."

Thereafter, he bowed down to Hari and circumambulating him wandered over many places. Making his pilgrimage duly he reached the city of Avimukta (Kāśī). After entering the limits of Avimukta, when Dhurjaṭi (Śiva) observed, he did not see Brahmahatyā following him. She was standing outside. Knowing that it was a holy centre belonging to Viṣṇu and

1. Nārāyaṇa was the son of Dharma and Mūrti. (Bh. P. I. 3.9, II. 7.6, Mbh. Śānti 334.9-12).

destructive of sins he became satisfied in mind and enthusiastically eulogised Viṣṇu, the Lord worthy of being saluted.

39. "Be victorious, be victorious, O Lord of the universe O Lord Viṣṇu, the storehouse of bliss of the entire universe, knowable only through the Vedas; O suppressor of demon Madhu, O Nṛsiṁha, O yellow-robed one, O One riding on Garuḍa, O Mādhava, O primordial Lord.

40. O Lord of Ramā, the lover of Vrajas, (cowherd's colony), Lord of Rādhā, Lord of the Devas, the fulfiller of the desires of all, O Kṛṣṇa, O foremost among the Devas, O ocean of kindness, O destroyer of anguish, O lotus-eyed, O Lord of the greatest beings.

41. O Ornament of the family of Yadu, O resident of the milky ocean, O Śauri, O archer, O expert in the art of uplifting the mountain (Govardhana), O deity having a pair of the lotus-feet that destroy the sin of Kali age, O deity who bestow favour on those who eulogise thee, O Kūrma (Divine Tortoise), O son of Kaśyapa (Vāmana).

42. O Paraśurāma—the fire for the forest of wicked kings, O Buddha with a saffron cloth that cleaned off blood from all sacrifices, O Kalkin, O remover of the fear of worldly existence, O deity governable by (i.e. under the influence of) the devotees, O cowherd, who lift up those who bow down to you, O Lord of sacred fame and name.

43. O remover of the burden of the Earth, O Lord worthy of being worshipped by the enemies of Asuras, O Lord of Prakṛti, O residential abode of the whole universe, O Rāma, O Lord of the mobile and immobile beings shining with many attributes, O Lord who are beyond the three Guṇas., O eternal one, O Lord worthy of being worshipped at the head of all, O Lord who protect the enemy of the annihilator Yama through your own people, O Lord with lotus-like feet, O beautiful Padmanābha, O lotus-palmed Lord, O Lord favourite of the resident of the lotus (i.e. God Brahmā), O Lord, worthy of being saluted by the destroyer of Kāma and the Lord of three worlds (?)

44. O remover of sins, O Lord of the Raghus, O Lord of the Yādavas, one who are fond of Brāhmaṇas, O greater than the greatest one, O Lord worthy of being worshipped by the immortal beings, O wielder of the ploughshare, O remover of sins, O Lord, worthy of being bowed to ; O Lord pervaded by the three Guṇas, O cleverest one in the three worlds and three units of Time.

45. O Lord with the sole duty of destroying the hosts of demons, O sinless one, O Lord lying on Śeṣa, the king of serpents, O destroyer of Kaṁsa, O Lord having the sun and the moon as eyes, O Lord of powerful activities, O Lord having the lustre of fresh clouds, O Lord of the Goddess of Fortune.

46. O sacrifice, O Lord maintaining sacrifice, O Lord who were bound with a rope by your mother, O Lord fond of fresh butter, O Lord of groups of cowherd lasses, O destroyer of demons Agha, Baka, Vṛṣa, Keśin and Pūtanā, O destroyer of Triśiras, Bāli and the ten-headed Rāvaṇa.

47. O destroyer of Naraka and Mura, O Lord who cut off the hands of Bāṇa, O Lord worthy of being worshipped by the enemy of the Tripuras, O friend of Sudāman, O Lord worthy of being served, O Lord whose lotus-like feet constitute a raft that takes one across the ocean of worldly existence, O Lord whose Aiśvarya (Lordship and prowess) is manifest, O ancient one, O One whose arms are full.

48-49. O Lord who can be attained only through the merits of many births, O Lord worthy of all auspicious things, knowable through the Vedas, O receptacle of Śrutis (Vedas), O quiescent, pure, bestower of boons, I seek refuge in your excellent pair of feet; it destroys sins, protect me.

50. There is none who can grant salvation to me other than the ancient Puruṣa. Be pleased with me with this request." The Lord of the universe, who was thus eulogised with great devotion by Lord Śambhu, Viṣṇu favourably disposed towards the devotees manifested himself suddenly.

51. On seeing Hari, Hara fell on the ground like a staff. O leading Brāhmaṇa, he got up again and with palms joined in reverence he bowed down to him.

52. Viṣṇu spoke to that leader of Bhūtas (goblins) who had bowed to him—"Choose a boon, I will give it to you. I am pleased with your eulogy."

53. On hearing the words of the Lord, Bhūteśa, Lord of the goblins who had been harassed by the evil of the slaughter of a Brāhmaṇa spoke this to Hari who is the bestower of worldly pleasures and liberation.

54. "O wielder of discus and iron club, I wish to stay in your holy centre since the 'brāhmaṇa-slaughter' is seen stationed outside the limits of your holy centre.

55. O Garuḍa-bannered deity, be merciful to me by the gift of this holy centre. On my going out, the evil of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter will harass me again.

56. Stationed in your holy centre, I will derive worship in all the three worlds."

After saying this to the Lord of the Devas the bull-bannered deity kept quiet.

57. The lover of Lakṣmī, the daughter of the milk ocean, said "So be it" and accepted the proposal. O leading Brāhmaṇa, ever since then, this place is mentioned as the holy centre pertaining to Śiva.

58-59. But poets knew this as the ancient holy centre of Keśava. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, water (tears) gushed out of the eyes of Viṣṇu overwhelmed with sympathy. Thereby the lake called Bindusaras originated. At the behest of Viṣṇu, the bull-bannered Lord took his ablution there.

60. No sooner did Hara take his holy dip therein, then the skull of Brahmā fell down from his hand. That sacred lake became famous by the name of Kapālamocana.

61. Bound by the emotional feelings of devotion of Śambhu, Viṣṇu is stationed there by the name of Bindu-Mādhava after giving his own abode to the Trident-bearing Lord.

62. He was resorted to by the Sky-clad Śiva; he had the lustre of ten thousand suns. In this manner, Brahmā and other Devas residing in Heaven ever see him.

63. O darling (husband), obstacles are put by the trident-bearing Lord (in the lives of people) so that they will serve him. People who are overwhelmed by these obstacles will eulogise Viṣṇu and then worship Śiva.

64-65. All those people dwell here thinking "Lord is Śiva: the city is Kāśī. O Brāhmaṇa, by thinking about Śiva, the devotees of Śiva are free from perturbation. They go to Siva's world devoid of old age and death. Good men endowed with many merits stay here free from ailments.

66-67. O lover of Kāśi, those who partake of the leavings of sacrifice become endowed with prosperity. O excellent Brāhmaṇa they do not extol ablution here nor Japa, nor the worship of the Devas nor charitable gifts. Excepting the abandoning of one's physical body nothing else is praised. After courting death here a man certainly becomes contented and blessed.

68. O Brāhmaṇa, such a city full of palaces, has been reached by us. It is conducive to the salvation of even those who indulge in worldly pleasures: what then of those who observe holy vows.

69. May this maiden who had been formerly separated from her parents by that wicked Rākṣasa be left in the palace of the Lord of Kāśī.

70-72. This virgin who had been practising observances had been abducted by that Rākṣasa for sexual intercourse. Thus the power of this holy centre has been described, O excellent Brāhmaṇa. All Karmans auspicious and inauspicious, of past, present and future, perpetrated knowingly or unknowingly do perish here. It is for the destruction of Karmans that this city was formerly built by (Viṣṇu). Men who die therein never experience fierce and endless misery nor the tortures of Yama.

CHAPTER THIRTY

The story of Kāṣṭhilā (Contd.)

Kāṣṭhilā said :

1. On hearing these words based on (and approved by) Dharma of his wife, the ogress, the Brāhmaṇa and girl descended from the back of the ogress who had assumed the form of a she-elephant.

2. When the Brāhmaṇa got down, that ogress became once again a beautiful young woman with her face resembling the moon and with plump and protruding breasts.

3. On reaching the splendid city of her own father, that virgin spoke to the city governor who had come there in the course of his duty of guarding the exterior limits of the city.

4-7. O city Governor, go to my father the king Sudyumna and tell him that I Ratnāvalī alias Ratnaśālā* who had been abducted from his city, from my bed, have come back. O Brāhmaṇa, (you remember) that I had been abducted though I had been considered the jewel of the king Sudyumna. His daughter has come back alive and safe and sound. (You tell him as though I say) "O dear father, be consoled. Do not feel sorry on my account, O leading king, I have never been ravaged. I am like the pure water of the Gaṅgā. I have brought about your fame (I have not marred your fame). I am the index of the good nature of my mother."

8. On hearing the words of the virgin, the city-governor who was well known as Abāhu reached the presence of Sudyumna in a hurry.

9-10. He made obeisance and on being asked spoke to the king respectfully. "O king, O bestower of honour, your daughter well known as Ratnāvalī, who had been lost has come back. She is accompanied by a Brāhmaṇa in the company of a woman. She was seen by me standing outside the city limits but could not be recognized.

**Ratna-śālām* in the Text. It should have been rather *Ratna-śālāyāḥ* who was abducted from *Ratna-śālā*. She was sleeping in Ratnaśālā. The Accusative is used for Ablative in the text. [*vide* v. 17 below]

11. Urged by her, O Lord, I have come to report the matter to you. She says "I am unravaged. May my father know that I have come back.

12-13a. O father no doubt need be entertained in respect to my good action." On hearing these wonderful words of the city Governor, the king instantaneously set off alongwith his wife, ministers and the Brāhmaṇa priest.

13b-14a After going out of the city the king saw his daughter comfortably seated on the banks of the Gaṅgā. She was as refulgent as the sun. She was accompanied by a Brāhmaṇa alongwith a woman.

14b-15. She was bedecked in her natural dress though she was fond of ornaments. She had the lustre of unfading flowers. She was refulgent like molten gold. After seeing her from a distance, the king hurriedly went near her and embraced her.

16. Over-joyed she too embraced her father and bowed down to him. Then she met her mother with great delight within her heart.

17-18. Addressing her father, the king, the large-eyed girl spoke these words. "Surrounded by my female friends I was sleeping in the Hall of Jewels. O dear father, without washing my feet I lay with my head directed towards the north on the couch anxiously pondering over a possible alliance with a husband. I was abducted during the middle of the night.

19. Taking me with him, the demon went to his city beyond the ocean on a mountain full of different kinds of jewels. I was confined in a cave.

20. There he was thinking deeply within himself about the means of a marriage with me. This lady of beautiful eyebrows and slender waist who stands here, is his wife.

21-22. She is an ogress who has assumed a human form. She had been the wife of that demon. O King, using the Śakti of god Indra intelligently she caused the death of her own husband of ruthless actions, at the hands of the Brāhmaṇa. It was through the intercession of fate that even before me the Brāhmaṇa had reached the mountain.

23-24a. This ogress found that her husband was a defiler of virtue. Moreover, she became enamoured of the hand-

some features of the Brāhmaṇa. Urged by her own Karman, she entered into an agreement with the Brāhmaṇa, for wedded life (with him) and brought about the death of the Rākṣasa.

24b-26. Thus, after having made the Brâhmaṇa her husband, she assumed the form of a she-elephant. The wealth got in exchange of all the articles of the house was kept on her back alongwith the Brāhmaṇa and myself. O king, she has now come here to your mansion. O king, it was by this Rākṣasī that I had been saved from that demon. Hence, honour and worship her alongwith the Brāhmaṇa.

27. With her permission give me in marriage to this Brāhmaṇa. I shared the same seat with him. Hence he has become my husband.

28. "He alone shall be the husband of a woman, with whom she shares the same seat. No one else, so we hear in the Purāṇas and Āgamas.

29. I had occupied her back with delight alongwith this Brāhmaṇa. Hence, in my opinion he must be my husband, according to Dharma.

30. Hence, dear father, console this lady and give me to the Brāhmaṇa in accordance with the injunctions in the Āgamas and other scriptural texts. I do not wish to choose any other husband."

31. On hearing these words of his daughter, Sudyumna the king, consoled the ogress in the form of the lady of slender waist. He stood bowing down with humility.

[*Sudyumna requested* :]

32. "This, my daughter, afraid of losing her merits (Dharma), has sought refuge in you alone. For that reason O chaste woman, your previous husband was killed by you.

33. Hence, O gentle lady, she has become one subservient to you. This, my daughter wishes to have as her husband the same gentleman who had been made by you your husband.

34. O Ogress, you have been requested by me by means of obeisances and gifts. O lady of beautiful eyes, give your consent to my daughter by extending your help to her.

35. At your instance, may my daughter be even the hand-maid of the Brāhmaṇa. Eschew the feelings of rivalry common among co-wives and protect my daughter.

36. There is no doubt about this that you are the mistress of myself, my daughter, my wife, my army, my people, my city and even the whole of my kingdom.

37-38. She will always abide by your instructions." On hearing these words of Sudyumna, the ogress approved his statement with a pure conscience mentally (deciding to be) her co-wife. She spoke thus to the king who was ready to give her in marriage.

39. "O excellent king, since you bowed to me with pure feelings, may this lady be the second wife of the Brāhmaṇa.

40. In the bright half of the month of Phālguna, I must be worshipped in the temple by you alongwith all the citizens.

41. Beginning with Aṣṭamī, the eighth day and ending with Caturdaśī, the festivities must be conducted by means of songs and instrumental music alongwith actors and dancers.

42-43a. Oblations of intoxicating beverages, meat, blood, etc. must be given in the course of worship. If you continue to do in this manner I shall always be the cause of your welfare. O leading king, keep your own words."

43b-44. On hearing these words of the ogress, Sudyumna, the king, accepted everything that had been proposed by that delighted lady. When it had been agreed to by the king, the ogress became satisfied.

45. She lovingly spoke to the Brāhmaṇa "O excellent Brāhmaṇa, make this splendid princess also your wife in the manner laid down in the Gṛhya texts.

46-47. I shall eschew jealousy and malice and be a sister to this large-eyed girl." At the instance of the ogress, the Brāhmaṇa, married the daughter of the king who had been endowed with much wealth. Seated on the ogress who assumed the form of a she-elephant, he went to the city of Mahodaya (Kanauj) instantaneously.

48. Then I heard thus—"O gentle lady, your husband

has returned with plenty of wealth and jewels with two wives also in the bargain."

49. Thereupon, I was rebuked and cursed by the kinsmen, parents and friends with harsh and wounding words.

50. "O lady greedy of money, how will you go to your husband who is endowed with fortune now, but who had been abandoned by you before since he was indigent and wretched ?

51. O blessed lady, in case of woman the riches inherited from parents are fickle and unsteady. It is stated that the riches earned by her husband are permanent.

52. He had once been rebuked by you with harsh words. How can you dare to speak to him now ? Your entry into his house is also difficult.

53. Granting that you are able to go there, O woman of evil actions, sharing the bed with your husband can never be conducive to your happiness.

54. If out of fear for the public censure your husband accepts you (once again), he will never have intercourse with you, because he is devoid of affection in the heart.

55. There is nothing else in the world so miserable as the coming together of a man and wife who are mentally far apart. It is exceedingly agitating and crippling."

56. I heard these and many other similar words uttered by the kinsmen. On hearing these I became extremely grief-stricken. With tears filling the eyes, I kept my face bent down.

57-58. I thought within myself thus :— "Formerly, I had been deluded by greediness. Hence neither the bangle of the hand nor the girdle round the waist nor the anklets round the legs were given up so that my husband could be satisfied. The husband is regarded in the world as the master of both wealth and life.

59. That wealth has been taken away by me. What will be my future ? How can I go to his abode ? How shall I speak to him again ?

60-62a. How can he who had been wickedly abandoned by me believe me now." Even as I was thinking thus in my perturbed mind, the palanquin surrounded by kinsmen arrived there. It was tender and elegant. It shone with an umbrella, resembling the moon in lustre. Deer skins were spread within it. Stout men bore it on their shoulders.

62b-63. Those men came in and requested me again and again: "O splendid lady, you have been invited by your husband. Hasten there with glee and joy. Your husband has returned endowed with plenty of wealth and jewels as well as two other wives.

64. O fair-faced lady, we had been sent by your husband immediately after his arrival, to fetch you who have been staying in the house of your parents."

65. O gentle lady, on noting that act of my husband I became ashamed. I did not say anything in reply to them. I remained silent.

66. Thereafter I was urged and enlightened again and again by the kinsmen. "You have been called by your husband with due honour. Hence go back to him.

67. O daughter, if the wife does not rejoin her husband when invited (to do so) she is born as a female crow for fifteen births."

68. They said thus and assuaged my grief. They took me hurriedly and made me sit in the palanquin with affection, they repeatedly said, 'Go'.

69. Thereafter those men placed the palanquin on their shoulders and started immediately with speed. They reached the city of Mahodaya where my husband was staying.

70. That his house had been surrounded by gold (i.e. full of articles, pots etc. of gold) was seen by me. It was fully equipped with furniture, foodstuffs, riches and raiments.

71. Then, O beautiful woman, that ogress and the gentle lady, the princess bowed to me with love and devotion.

72. I was befittingly greeted and honoured with love by those two ladies. Respected, and so delighted with the words of my husband, I took my bath and meal.

73. Thereafter, soon after sunset my husband called me and immediately clasped me within his arms. He made me sit on the couch and kept me within his embrace for a long time.

74. Then he called the ogress and the princess and said : "Service to this lady's feet should be rendered by both of you with due devotion.

75. She had been my wife previously. Hence she is certainly the eldest and senior-most to both of you." Then at the instance of our husband, my feet were touched by those two ladies.

76. O lady of beautiful eyes, they eschewed (completely) the jealousy and malice originating from the feeling that I am a cowife. Then, my husband called the servants and spoke those words.

77-78. "O servants, whatever wealth had been acquired by me at the outset from the possessions of the Rākṣasa, whatever had been received by me when I wedded the daughter of the king, bring these things respectfully. Do not delay. This lady is the mistress of everything of those riches."

79-81. O splendid lady, at his words the wealth was immediately brought by the servants. My husband offered the entire wealth to me with love and mind untarnished by deception. He honoured me with ornaments and garments, even as the two ladies, the ogress and the princess were looking on.

82. O splendid lady, he kissed my lips and embraced me as I was seated on the couch. On seeing this wonderful dedication of his self and wealth unto me by my husband, (and on hearing) his words that thrilled me and (feeling excited) because his hands pressed my breasts, I fell down dead like a cow struck down by a sword. My vital breaths left me.

83. Then I attained the torture in the hell assigned to me by Yama. O splendid lady, after covering that period I experienced anguish and misery and was born as a Kāṣṭhīlā.

84-85. I shall have to be born in the animal kingdom thousands of times. O splendid-faced lady, the woman who does not dedicate her wealth and life to her husband will undoubtedly attain this state. By understanding this, one should save the wealth and life of one's husband.

86. Husband is both father and mother, wealth and life, preceptor and salvation.

87. With a great deal of merits the woman goes to the region of Viṣṇu alongwith her husband if her body is cremated alongwith him. But a woman greedy of wealth and of her body (?) attains Yama's torture and the affliction of being born in base wombs in lower species.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

The Glory of the month of Māgha

Vasiṣṭha said :

1-4. On hearing the words of that Kāṣṭhīlā, the lady of pure smiles named Sandhyāvalī became extremely surprised and addressed her with respect. "O Kāṣṭhīlā, by your words I am much surprised now. Why at all did I happen to see you attaining the base mode of existence ? By what Karman can your liberation be effected from this base birth ? O, one of large limbs, please tell this to me. On seeing you I have become miserable. O excellent one, pity is roused in my heart, on seeing your body resembling a lump of meat that is smooth and comparable to a lump of butter.

Kāṣṭhīlā said :

5. O lady of charming eyebrows, even if you are going to give the entire earth for my sake, I cannot all of a sudden extricate myself from this base birth.

6. O blessed lady, listen, I shall point out that holy rite (from which accrues merit) that bestows the great goal, whereby I can liberate myself from the bondage of Karmas.

7. What is called the month of Māgha is remembered as the most excellent of all months. In it, Brāhmaṇă-slaughter

and other sins cry out in distress (as they are annihilated therein).

8. Rare indeed is the month of Māgha; rare indeed is the human birth; rare indeed is the ablution early in the morning and rare indeed is the opportunity to serve Kṛṣṇa.

9-12. Rare still is the day of Viṣṇu (i e. the Ekādaśī Tithi) that is duly observed as the day of fast. Their own splendour has been cast off into the water by gods during the month of Māgha. Here water is very particularly sacred during this month. The goal that is obtained by persons who maintain regular observances by means of bathing into the water early in the morning, is the bestower of happiness, and is never attained by even heroic warriors (after death) in the battle. If one takes one's bath in the waters of rivers, lakes or tanks it is called the most excellent. If the bath is taken in the well water kept in a vessel, it is of mediocre benefit. If water that is warmed in fire is taken for bath, it is of the least benefit. Merit cannot be attained through pleasures. It is obtained only through distress and exertion.

13. Bath is taken for the purpose of observing holy and virtuous rites and not merely for the sake of purity and cleanliness of the limbs. Fire is resorted to for the purpose of performing Homas and not for removing chillness.

14. Bath should be taken before the sunrise. If the sky is overcast with clouds, one should pray and request the sun who is going to rise.

15. If rivers etc. are not available, water should be kept over-night in a fresh mud-pot. Wind must blow over it during the night. People know such water to be equal to the Gaṅgā for the purpose of holy ablution.

16. O fair lady, a person who regularly takes bath in the month of Māgha, never sees misery and misfortune. There exists no such sin as cannot be wiped off by the holy bath during the month of Māgha.

17-18. Taking the holy dip into water in the morning during the month of Māgha is better than entering fire (?) Misery is experienced if one survives (after entering fire) but

if one dies one enjoys happiness. For this reason, O gentle lady the bath during the month of Māgha is of special significance Everyday gingelly seeds along (or coated ?) with sugar must be given as charitable gifts.

19. O lady of slender waist, Homa should be performed with cooked rice as white as hail or with barley grains foll wed by the oblation of cow's ghee on the full-moon day in the month of Māgha.

20. At the end of the holy observance of (pre-sunrise) bath in the month of Māgha one shall give food consisting of the six tastes (such as sweet, sour and others) and say "May the lord, the sun-god be pleased with me—Lord sun who is unsullied and the embodiment of Viṣṇu.

21. To a Brāhmaṇa couple, clothes should be given along with seven kinds of food. Thirty sweet-meats too must be given as well as gingelly seeds and cooked rice along with sugar.

22. The gingelly seeds and sugar must be in the ratio of three to one. The devotee who knows the procedure must give Tāmbūla (betel leaves) and other sources of enjoyment with devotion.

23. One should face the current when one bathes in a river, if it be in any other place (tank etc.), one should face the sun. There he must invoke Gaṅgā and other holy rivers from the disc of the sun (and then take bath).

24-25. "There are thousands of sins originating in the course of many births, some knowingly committed, some unknowingly committed. But may all those be dispelled by your brilliance, O sun, O Lord of the worlds, O Prabhākara (cause of lustre), obeisance be to you. O Acyuta, make my (observance of) holy dip in the month of Māgha well accomplished and complete."

26. O fair lady, the devotee who takes bath in the holy centres gets lesser benefit than the devotee who takes holy dip in the month of Māgha. One may go to heaven by means of baths in the holy centres. One goes to the highest region (Mokṣa) through the bath in the month of Māgha.

27. The eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Māgha is the destroyer of great sins, if it coincides with a Sunday.

28-36. Even without the conjunction of the constellation Pleiades, the eleventh day in the bright half of Māgha burns the sins of men in the same manner as a base king spoils the kingdom, or as a bad son the family, or as a vicious wife the husband, or as sin the virtue, or as the wicked minister ruins the king, or as ignorance dispels (i.e. vitiates) knowledge, or as complete uncleanliness mars purity, or as untruth dispels truth, or as a controversy spoils a conversation or as heat dispels snow or as misfortune spoils fortune, or as a sin mars fame or arrogance vitiates austerity. Just as Rasas (medicinal potions) destroy great ailments, just as Śaṅkara (fixing of rendezvous) spoils śrāddha (?), so also the Dvādaśī, if properly observed, destroys heaps of sins. The day of Hari (Ekādaśī) quickly destroys the great sins such as Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, imbibing of liquor, stealing, and outraging the modesty of the preceptor's wife. The collections of these sins are not quelled by bath in Puṣkara. Neither the holy centre of the Naimiṣa forest nor Kurukṣetra nor Prabhāsa, Gayā, Revā, Sarasvatī, Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Prayāga nor the river Devikā nor the lakes nor rivers nor Homas, gifts and austerities (can dispel these sins). Excepting the only (auspicious) day of Hari i.e. Ekādaśī no other day can destroy the multitude of sins; no other merit is clearly mentioned in the Purāṇa O lady of charming eyebrows, for the purpose of destroying aggregates of sins.

37-40. O gentle lady, by observing fast even for once, heaps of sins do perish. On one side of the balance the gift of the whole Earth and on another side the day of Hari, it is declared by Brahmā that they are not equal. The day of Hari is superior. On that day, the devotee should make a gold image of the Lord in the form of a Boar. An auspicious new copper vessel shall be kept over a jar. Into that vessel the image of the lord should be placed, so also all the seeds. It must be covered with a white cloth. Gold pieces, bright lamp etc. should be placed, and the vessel be decorated with flowers. The observer of the holy rite should worship the Lord in accordance with the injunctions and keep himself awake.

41. In the morning, the devotee should gift away the jar alongwith the Boar image and all the things within it and

also the Naivedyas and other ancillary articles to a Brāhmaṇa householder who is a devotee of Viṣṇu.

42. After feeding Brāhmaṇas, he should break his fast surrounded by his friends. O fair lady, if this observance is performed, he is never born again anywhere.

43. The sin accumulated in the course of many births whether knowingly or unknowingly committed, is wholly destroyed like the darkness at sunrise.

44. O splendid lady, the holy rite of Ekādaśī has been recounted to you by me in accordance with the (description of the same in the) scriptural texts. O gentle lady, this is the same as had been performed formerly by you in the course of another birth.

45-46. As a result of this holy rite, you have derived incomparable nourishment. It will be enhanced further later on. It is the bestower of happiness on your husband and son always. If, out of that merit a fourth part is willingly and respectfully given to me, I will become delighted and will go to the greatest region of Viṣṇu.

47. O beautiful woman, I had incurred a sin due to the denial and concealment of the wealth. In order to sanctify it (i.e. in order to dispel it and sanctify me) kindly give me one fourth part of your merit as I just now requested for.

48. The woman who deceives her husband with regard to the life or wealth undergoes hundred births in the wombs of germs and is reborn ultimately as a Pulkasī (Cāṇḍāla woman).

49. O honourable lady, the woman of perverted mind who does not yield herself up for sexual intercourse when the husband requests for the same or does not give him wealth (when he needs it) certainly is reborn as Kāṣṭhīlā (a worm ?).

50. If you have any mercy on me, give me a fourth part of your merit accruing from the observance of the holy rite of Ekādaśī for the purpose of dispelling the sin, which I had incurred.

51. O lady of good eyes, on hearing the words of that Kāṣṭhīlā, I took water in my hand and gave the (required) merit to her.

52. "By one-fourth of the merit accrued to me formerly by observing a fast on the Ekādaśī day, may this Kāṣṭhīlā be

liberated from the sins committed by her in the previous birth. What I have averred is truth and nothing but the truth."

53b-54a. When those words were uttered by me, she was seen going to the region of Viṣṇu seated in a divine aerial chariot. Her lustre was like that of lightning.

54b-55. The husband is a deity in the visible world. He should not be deceived by the wife either through her body or through her wealth, if she wishes for splendid existence (in the next birth). Hence, you speak out. I shall give you what is desired by you for the sake of our husband.

56-57. O fair-faced lady, I shall give up wealth, body, my own son or anything else (if you desire it). Who else is a deity unto the women in this world except her own husband ? O lady of beautiful eyes, the woman who sacrifices her wealth or life for his sake, is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu for the duration of a hundred crores of Kalpas and more.

58. The wife of the Brāhmaṇa saw her husband, who had wooed her with fire etc. as witness, indulging in terrible vices. So she became ruthless. Although she was requested, she did not give him wealth, as a result of that sin she became a worm.

59. During my girlhood days this flag-staff of Kāma was seen by me when I was at my father's place. After knowing that it is beneficial to the husband, I give up everything. O lady of beautiful eyebrows, take it.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

The Narration by Sandhyāvalī

Vasiṣṭha continued :

1. On hearing the words of Sandhyāvalī, Mohinī the daughter of Brahmā who was Mohakaraṇḍikā (a box of delusion ?) said thus, as she was interested in her own mission.

2-3. "O splendid lady, if thus you know the ways of Dharma and Adharma, and if for the sake of your husband you will readily give up your wealth and life, I beg of you then, O splendid lady, a wealth that is superior to life. Give me the head of your son which is liked by you more than the heart.

4-8a. If your husband, the king does not take food on the day of Hari (Ekādaśī), may he take the sword in his hand and cut off the beautiful head of Dharmāṅgada, which is splendid, which is comparable to the disc of the moon, which is decorated with two ear-rings and in which the moustache has not yet grown. O lady of beautiful eyes, may he cut it off and let it fall on to my lap. If he does not take food, O gentle lady, at least do this on the day of lord Viṣṇu, that is destructive of heaps of sins."

On hearing these words of Mohinī couched in bitter words, (Sandhyāvalī) the gentle lady shivered for a short while like the plantain tree blasted by chillness.

8b-14. Thereafter, Sandhyāvalī, the fair-complexioned lady mustered courage and composure and spoke these words to Mohinī, smilingly and preserving gentle expression on the face, —"O lady of beautiful eyebrows, these verses are heard mentioned in the Purāṇas. They are connected with Ekādaśī. They are the bestowers of heavenly bliss and salvation. (They are as follows :) "One should abandon wealth, one should eschew one's wife, life and house. One should abandon one's land, king, heaven, friends, and preceptor. One may leave off the holy centre, Dharma and whatever one is most fond of. One shall eschew Yoga, charitable gifts, perfect knowledge and holy rites. One should leave off austerities, Vidyā (learning), Siddhi (achievement of supernatural powers) and even salvation, O splendid lady. But one shall not leave off the holy Ekādaśī rite in both fortnights. Sons, brothers, friends and beloved ones, all are but persons with whom we come in contact only here (in this world). But Ekādaśī is remembered, O gentle lady, as the means of achievement of pleasures both here and hereafter (in this world and the other world). Thanks to the power of Ekādaśī, everything will become beneficent.

15. O blessed lady, I shall make him give you the head

of Dharmāṅgada for your satisfaction. O splendid lady, believe in my statement and be happy.

16. In this matter, O gentle lady, this traditional mythological story is heard. I shall tell you, O gentle lady, listen with attention.

17. Formerly, there was a Daitya devoted to virtuous activities. (His name was) Virocana.[1] His wife, a lady of large eyes, was interested in the worship of Brāhmaṇas.

18. O lady of beautiful eye-brows, every day in the morning, she used to worship a sage in accordance with the injunctions. With great devotion and a delighted mind, she used to drink the water with which his feet had been washed.

19-21. (Defective) The Devas became apprehensive of the son of Prahlāda (i.e. Virocana) in the same manner as they were, while Hiraṇyakaśipu of fierce valour was ruling over the kingdom. Even when he was dead, they moved about on the Earth with great anxiety when the son of Prahlāda (i.e. Virocana) was himself delighted. Once those Devas the chief of whom was Indra, consulted Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of the Devas and said : "We are oppressed by the enemies. What is it that should be done by us ?" On hearing those words of the Devas, the preceptor Bṛhaspati said :

22-23. "Viṣṇu must be respectfully informed by the Devas (gods) who have become miserable." On hearing the utterance of their preceptor, the Devas of unmeasured splendour went to Vaikuṇṭha for securing the death of Virocana. After going there, they eulogised Viṣṇu, the most excellent of all Devas, by reciting hymns.

The Devas said :

24. Obeisance to the overlord of the Devas, to Viṣṇu of unmeasured splendour. Repeated salutes to the destroyer of obstacles of devotees, to Vaikuṇṭha (Viṣṇu).

1. Virocana was Bali's father. As such he preceded Viṣṇu's incarnation as Vāmana. Strictly speaking, reference to Viṣṇu calling him by his future incarnation as Paraśurāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha etc. is anachronic. But the Purāṇa-writers have not developed that sense. To the author of the NP., Viṣṇu is Para-Brahman. Hence addressing him as Śiva, the universe, Kāla etc., is natural (vide VV. 30-40 below).

25. Obeisance to Hari, the miraculous lion. Hāil to the noble-souled Vāmana. Bow to the deity of the form of a Boar. Obeisance to the Divine Fire, the resident of the ocean (at the time) of dissolution of the universe.

26. Obeisance to the Tortoise, the upholder of the Mandara mountain. Hail to Bhārgva; obeisance to the deity lying in the ocean; Bow to Rāma the lord of all; obeisance to the lord of the universe, the cosmic witness.

27. Obeisance to Dattātreya, the pure one; obeisance to Kapila, the remover of distress; Bow to the sacrifice the upholder of Dharma; obeisance to the deity of the form of Sanaka and others.

28. Hail to the deity who granted boons to Dhruva; to Prthu of plenty of activities; to Ṛṣabha the pure one; obeisance to the Ātman bearing horse's head.

29. Bow to Haṁsa (the swan), the embodiment of Āgama, to the deity holding the vessel of nectar; obeisance to Kṛṣṇa, to Vāsudeva, to the deity who assumes the form of Saṁkarṣaṇa.

30. Obeisance to Pradyumna, to Aniruddha, to Brahmā, Śaṅkara, to Kumāra, to Gaṇeśa, to Nandin, to Bhṛṅgin.

31. Obeisance to the deity staying on the mountain Gandhamādana, obeisance to Nara and Nārāyaṇa. Bow to the lord of the universe; obeisance to Rāmeśvara.

32. Hail to the resident of Dvārakā; obeisance to the resident of Tulasī grove. Obeisance to the deity having the lotus in umbilicus. Bow to you the lotus-footed.

33. Obeisance to the Lotus-handed deity; obeisance to you, the Lotus-eyed one. Hail to the protector of Kamalā (Lakṣmī). Repeated obeisance to Keśava.

34. Bow to the deity having the form of the Sun; obeisance to the deity assuming the form of the moon; obeisance to the deity having the form of the guardians of the worlds (quarters). Hail to the deity assuming the form of Prajāpati.

35. Obeisance to the deity of the form of the groups of elements (or mass of living beings); obeisance to the splendour in the form of the Jīva (individual soul); obeisance to the Victory, to the victorious, to the leader, to the deity in the form of observances and holy rites.

36. Obeisance to the deity devoid of attributes, to the deity without desires, to the deity the knower of ethics, to the Ātman devoid of motion, to Buddha, to the deity of the form of Kalki, to Kṣetrajña; obeisance to the imperishable.

37. Obeisance to Govinda; to the lord of the universe, to the infinite one, to the primordial one; obeisance to the deity having the bow Śārṅga; to the deity wielding the conch and the iron club. Bow to the deity holding the discus.

38. Hail to the deity having the sword; obeisance to the Trident-bearing deity: obeisance to the deity striking with all weapons and missiles; Bow to the deity worthy of being a refuge; obeisance to the transcendental deity. Bow to the great Ātman.

39. Obeisance to Hṛṣīkeśa; to the deity identical with the universe; obeisance to you of the form of the universe. Hail to the deity having the Time as his umbilicus; salute to Kāla (God of Death, Time). Bow to the deity having the moon and the sun for his eyes; obeisance to the perfect one; obeisance to the deity worthy of being served. Hail to the deity who is greater than the greatest.

40. Obeisance to the maker of the universe, to the upholder of the universe, and to the annihilator of the universe; obeisance to one who fascinates, to one who agitates, to one who assumes the form as he desires; obeisance to the unborn, to the poet (the wise one).

41. O lord, on being oppressed by the Daityas, we have sought refuge in you. Hence, O supporter of everything, do that whereby we may be happy.

42a. May we sport about accompanied by our sons, friends, wives and others."

42b.-45a. On hearing their hymn of praise, Vaikuṇṭha (god Viṣṇu) was delighted in his mind. He granted personal vision to those Devas who were distressed and harassed by the Daityas. On seeing Vaikuṇṭha (God Viṣṇu), the lord of the chiefs of the Devas very affectionate at heart, they respectfully prayed to him for the destruction of Virocana. On hearing the main task of those Devas the chief of whom was Indra, the lord who is the foremost among those who know their duties, consoled the Devas with Love and let them off fully delighted and joyous.

45.B-48. When the groups of the Devas had gone, the lord who is the foremost among the knowers of all expedients, assumed the form of an old Brāhmaṇa and went to the abode of Virocana. He, the achiever of the missions, reached the place at the time of the worship of the Brāhmaṇas. On seeing him, Viśālāksī (a lady of large eyes) became delighted in her mind. After greeting and honouring the extra-ordinary Brāhmaṇa with devotion, she gave him the seat. Without accepting the seat given by her, he told her :— "O splendid and gentle lady, I am not accepting the great seat offered by you.

49-50.A Listen. The mission for which I have come here is incomparable. O woman of honour, he who understands the task kept in my mind must agree to its fulfilment. Then, O fairfaced lady, I will accept his wor-hip."

50.B-51.A On hearing the words of the old Brāhmaṇa the lady (though) an expert in understanding the deep significance of expressions, was deluded by the Māyā of Viṣṇu, as she was a woman. She spoke with great delight.

Viśālākṣi said :-

51-55.A "O Brāhmaṇa, I shall give you whatever may be in your mind. Take it from me. Here is the seat. Here is the water for washing the feet. Give unto me the desired object (viz. the water where-with you wash the feet)". On being requested thus, the Brāhmaṇa said, "I do not believe in the words of a woman. If your husband says it I can believe."

On hearing the words spoken by the Brāhmaṇa, the mistress of the abode of Virocana invited her husband there itself, in the presence of the Brāhmaṇa.

At the instance of the messenger, the delighted son of Prahlāda came to the harem where his wife Viśālākṣī was present.

55.B-57.A On seeing her husband arrived, the lady engaged in holy rites got up, bowed to the leading Brāhmaṇa and offered the seat. When he did not accept the seat offered respectfully, she informed her husband, the king of the Daityas.

57B-61.A. On coming to know of the incident, Virocana, the king of Daityas, was swayed by his love for his wife. With

mind deluded, he accepted the (proposal of the Brāhmaṇa). After understanding the mental idea when the Daitya accepted the suggestion, the Brāhmaṇa became delighted and said, :- " Offier me your age and longevity". Then the couple became deluded due to the grief caused by themselves. After meditating for a short while and joining the hands together, they spoke to the Brāhmaṇa, "O Brāhmaṇa, accept our life. Give us the water from your feet. We shall make your utterance true, Be delighted".

61.63 A. Janārdana who was delighted by their devotion, gave her the water from his feet. Viśālākṣī became joyous by washing the feetof the Brāhmaṇa. Along with her husband, she sprinkled water with which his feet were washed, over her head.

63.B. 65. O lady of beautiful eyebrows, the couple thereupon suddenly assumed divine forms, climbed into the excellent aerial chariot and went to the region of Viṣṇu.[1] Thereafter, the lord became delighted by uprooting the cause of grief to the Devas. He went to his abode in Vaikuṇṭha. He was eulogised by all the groups of Devas. Thus, O gentle ledy, what has been promised to you must be given to you by me.

66. O gentle lady, I will not make my husband Rukmāṅgada move away from truth. It is truth alone that has been glorified as the bestower of salvation on men.

67-68. They know that the man who has fallen off from truth is baser than a Cāṇḍāla". After speaking thus to Mohinī, the daughter of the lotus-born deity (Brahmā), Sandhyāvalī as refulgent as gold, and having beautiful eyebrows touched the feet of her husband with both of her hands, the feet that were copper-coloured with red toes.

1. The account of the death of Virocana given here—the self-sacrifice of Virocana and queen Viśālākṣī—is not complimentary to Viṣṇu. In the *Mbh. Śānti.* 98. 49-50, he was killed by Indra in the battle with demon Tāraka. This second version of Virocana's death is supported by Mt. P., Pd. P. and Brahmāṇḍa P.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

The Submission of Dharmāṅgada

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. Thereafter, O king, Sandhyāvalī clasped the feet of her husband. The gentle lady spoke these words about the (imminent) death of Dharmāṅgada (at his hands).

Sandhyāvalī said :

2. "O king, just as by you, so also by me, this lady has been advised in many ways. But nothing else appeals to Mohinī, the very embodiment of delusion.

3. She wants you to take food on the day of Viṣṇu or to kill your son. O lord striking the son down is better than violating the holy observance.

4. O king, the affliction of the father is not as severe as that of the mother in giving birth to the son.

5. Since the mother undergoes misery in holding the son in her womb, O king, her affection is excessive. O king, the affection of the father cannot be as much as that of the mother.

6. In the world, O leading king, the father is said to be the person who sows the seed, the mother is the porson who holds it within her womb. In protecting and nourishing the child, the mother is superior to the father.

7. The affection of the mother is hundred times more than that of the father. It is in view of this abundance of love and affection that they recognise that the mother is greater.

8. In spite of that, I have become devoid of affection towards the son, O leading king, because of my desire to win the other world through the maintenance of the truth of the words uttered.

9. Eschewing all your affectionate feelings O king, kill your son. Do not transgress the truthfulness of the words uttered. On my very soul, you are bound by an oath.

10-14. Hṛṣīkeśa will be the bestower of fruits (after testing persons) on touch-stones (of holy rites), if, after observing them, O king, no pain is felt in the body. There is no doubt about

this that it is through Adharma that a man falls off from heaven. The man who takes off his life or that of his son or sacrifices his possessions O king, and follows fate, is sung about as a great man. O king, blessed are those adversities which make men truthful. In view of their purpose of keeping up truthfulness, they may be the bestowers of salvation on men. In order to spread and guard their fame, holy rites must always be performed by men in the manner mentioned in the scriptures, without being swayed either by love or by hatred. Hence, O king, enough of your distress and anguish. Keep up the truth.

15. O king, by keeping up the truth, a man becomes united with Viṣṇu's person. This Mohinī (enchantress) is a touchstone created by the Devas for you.

16. O king, I consider that she has been made your wife (for this purpose), but you do not understand that. By your act of killing your son, the Devas will hang down their heads (in shame).

17. Placing your foot on their heads, you will attain the highest region. The Devas are the antagonists of those who have devotion towards Viṣṇu.

18-19. What has been made clear is that there will be blindness in the world. O king, the Devas along with the deities are antagonistic to you. With their activities, they break (obstruct) your path towards salvation. They cause you to drop down your resolve. Hence, O king, be steady and firm. Kill your dear son.

20-21. Carry out the directions of Mohinī by way of keeping up your own vow. O lord of kings, if the directives are unheeded, you will incur a terrible sin equal to that of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. O ruler of the earth, you will be going to the world of Śamana (i.e. Yama) and there will be damage to your reputation on the earth."

Vasiṣṭha said :

22. O king, on hearing the words of his wife, the king Rukmāṅgada spoke those words to Sandhyāvalī in the presence of Mohinī :—

23. "O beloved wife, the slaughter of one's own son is an exceedingly sinful act. It is worse than Brāhmaṇa-

slaughter. What will be my future destiny in the world, after killing my own son ?

24. Wherefore did I go to the Mandara mountain ? Wherefore did I meet with Mohinī ? O gentle lady, this is veritable Kāla or god of death in the form of the beloved (Mohinī), for the destruction of Dharmāṅgada.

25. What will be my future state by killing my son who is conversant with Dharma, who is endowed with humility, who reconciles and delights the people and who has no issue of his own ?

26-31. O gentle lady, the father incurs great misery even by killing a vicious son. What then if he happens to be by nature righteous and rendering regular service to his elders ? O fair-complexioned lady, this continent of Jambūdvīpa alone is enjoyed by me. But all the seven continents are being enjoyed by your son now. O fair lady, he is a part of Viṣṇu. He will surely be superior to his father. O fair lady, this son of mine, Dharmāṅgada who has been highly extolled in Purāṇas by poets (O wise sages) is superior to all on this earth.

O lady of charming limbs, he is the bestower of honour on my family as well as on me. Alas ! In this matter I am faced with a greater misery than even my son. O fair lady, with your auspicious utterances speak again to Mohinī who is deluded and so who gives me much grief."

32. After saying thus to his beloved wife Sandhyāvalī, the king came near Mohinī and spoke this :—

33-34. "O splendid lady, I will not take food on the day of Viṣṇu nor will I injure my son in any way. I would rather tear up my own self or the gentle lady Sandhyāvalī. At your behest, I may even do any other terrible deed. But, O lady of charming eyebrows, leave off your stubbornness in regard to my son.

35. What benefit will you attain by killing my son Dharmāṅgada ? What do you gain by compelling me to take food on the day of Viṣṇu ? Tell me.

36. O fair-faced lady, I am your servant. I am your slave. I am subservient to you. O blessed lady request for some other boon, I submit to you.

37-40. O lady of beautiful limbs, your feet are equal

to the red Aśoka flowers. I am absolutely obedient to you. I shall carry out some other purpose of yours.
I am subservient to you. O gentle lady, be pleased with me. Give me the alms in the form of my own son's life. A virtuous son is very rare to be obtained. The day of Hari (Ekādaśī) is a rare day of holy rites. Rare indeed is the water of Gaṅgā. Rare is a beloved mother on the Earth. Rare is the birth in a noble family. Rare is the beloved wife born of a good family. Rare is the charitable gift of gold. Rare is the facility to worship Hari. Rare is the initiation pertaining to Viṣṇu. Rare is the collection of Smṛti texts?

41-45A. Rare is the residence in the holy centre of Śaukara.* Rare is the opportunity to meditate on Hari; rare is the holy rite of keeping awake on the day of Viṣṇu; rare is the purification of the self (or getting honour to oneself); rare is the attainment of the birth of a son; rare is the holy water of Puṣkara; rare is the contact with virtuous eminent people; devotion is said to be rare; rare is the charitable gift of a Kapilā (tawny) cow; rare is the (facility to) set a blue (calf) free. O fair-faced lady, rare is the Śrāddha performed on Trayodaśī (Thirteenth day). Rare is the Earth (as an object of charitable gift). Rare is the observance of holy rite that destroys sins. O woman of sweet eyebrows, rare is the replica of cow made of gingelly seeds and given over to a Brāhmaṇa. O fair lady, rare is the bath with the embylic myrobalan. Rare is the day of Hari.

45B.-46. Rare indeed is bath in cold water at the auspicious time of the passage (Parva-kāla) of the moon, especially at the auspicious time of dawn in the month of Māgha. O queen, rare is the performance of a religious rite punctiliously in conformity to Śāstric injunctions.

47. Rare indeed is the wholesome diet and efficacious medicine that dispels sickness. Rare is the procedure along the path of scriptures.

48. Rare is the remembrance of Viṣṇu at the time of death, O fair-complexioned lady. Thus, O fair lady, carry out my words that protect Dharma.

*Mod. Soron on the Gaṅgā, 27 miles NE of Itah (U.P.). Viṣṇu in the Sūkara (Boar) form killed Hiraṇyākṣa here—DE 195.

49. O lady of beautiful limbs, of what advantage is the killing of my son to you ? It behoves you to be pleased. The worldly pleasures have been duly enjoyed. The kingdom has been made free of thorns.

50A. I have placed my foot on the heads of those (i.e. surpassed those) who protect Devas, cows and Brāhmaṇas.

50B-51. A. I will never injure with my hands my son who is the object of my destiny."

Mohini said :

52-53. Dharmāṅgada is not my enemy, nor do I kill your son. I have told you at the outset, "Eat on the day of Hari". O king, rule over the earth as you please, for many years. I do not kill your son. My object of accomplishment lies in your taking food. O king, I have no interest in the death of your son.

54. O king, if the son is dear to you, may the food be taken on the day of Hari. O king, of what avail are these laments which are beyond the pale of Dharma.

55-56. Keep the truth assiduously. Carry out my word. "Dharmāṅgada who was standing in front, observed Mohinī, the lady with slender waist, speaking thus. After bowing to her he said. It is this (here). Take it. Do not entertain any fear or suspicion, O beautiful lady.

57-60. He drew out his stainless glistenting sword and placed it in front of the king. He placed himself too in front of the king and said with a steady resolve in truth and virtue.

Dharmāṅgada requested :

"O my father, delay should not be made by you in striking me down. O king, make my mother's words true. Keep up your promise. The Ātman should be protected even at the sacrifice of wealth, wives or sons.

To a king who is desirous of welfare, the progeny is for the purpose of preservation of Dharma. Death for your sake is the bestower of ever-lasting salvation on me. You too will attain the pure worlds in virtue of your keeping of your own promise.

61-62A. Eschew the deep overwhelming sorrow originating from killing your own son. O lord, (even if) this body is abandoned, it will lead to the creation of another body, that is devoid of all sorts of ailments and equal to that of Indra.

62B-64. Those who are killed for the cause of their fathers, or for their mothers, or for cows, Brāhmaṇas, young women, Earth, king, or the deities, or for the sake of their children or the handicapped, attain the excessively brilliant worlds. Hence enough of your worries and anxieties. Kill me with your excellent sword.

65. O leading king, stick to your vow. Do not take food on the day of Hari. O king, one may kill one's own son or wife for the sake of Dharma.

66. It is heard in the Vedic texts : A person (i.e. a king) who sits consecrated for the performance of horse-sacrifice may kill his son in that excellent sacrifice and no sin is incurred thereby.

67. O king, whatever, Mohinī, my mother, says must be carried out unhesitatingly by you.

68. O leading king, be pleased. Carry out the suggestions made by me, in regard to my own death. O king you will then release yourself from the terrible utterance of falsehood through the interference of Mohinī.

69. O king, as a result of the killing of your own son, your fame will be illuminated. Thanks to the splendour of your fame, your reputation and esteem will be very high and ever-lasting. O dear father, no doubt should be entertained in this matter."

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Visions of the Lord

Vasiṣṭha said :—

1-4. On hearing the words of his son, the king Rukmāṅgada glanced at Sandhyāvalī's face resembling a lotus and became glad. (It seemed as though her face urged) : "listening to the words of Mohinī, do not take food. Kill the boy born of your body. Do not take food. Rather kill your son". This importunity was evident in her face. In the meantime, the Lotus-eyed Lord (Viṣṇu) came there and stood in the sky but in an invisible state. He began to watch the courage and fortitude of the three persons—the heroic king, Sandhyāvalī and Dharmāṅgada. O leading king, the unsullied lord Viṣṇu having the colour of the cloud, seated himself on the Lord of birds viz. his vehicle Garuḍa.

5-9. When the words "Eat, Eat" were uttered by Mohinī, the king took up the stainless (bright) sword to kill his son Dharmāṅgada, With a delighted mind, he made obeisance to the Garuḍa-emblemed lord. On seeing his father armed with the sword, Dharmāṅgada bowed down to his parents and to the discus-bearing Lord without any feelings of sorrow, he looked at the face of his mother, O great king.*

Dharmāṅgada who was endowed with devotion to his father and who was superior to all in his devotion to his mother, kept his neck close to the ground. His neck resembled a conch-shell. It was tender with the lustre of gold. It was plump and it contained many lines. He placed his neck on the path of sword.

10. O king, (Māndhātā), when the son offered his neck with delight in the face that resembled the beautiful moon, and when the lord of the Earth (i.e. Rukmāṅgada) took up his sword, the entire Earth along with the mountains began to quake.

11. Immediately the ocean tides arose as if to submerge the three worlds. Hundreds of meteors fell on the Earth with

**Nṛpa-Puṅgavaḥ* in the text has no predicate, hence taken in the Voc. as *Nṛpa-Puṅgava* (Māndhātā) "O king" is repeated even out of context in this part of the NP.

violent gusts of wind and thunder-bolt's stroke from the middle of the sky.

12-14. Thinking (to herself) : "O the mission of the Devas has not been accomplished by me. My birth has been thus fruitless. It has been made so by the fate that had created the universe. My enchanting beauty has been only a fraud, since the food is not taken in by the king on the day of Hari—the day that dispels the fear of sins. In the Heaven, I will be treated as equal to grass.

He who has abundance of Sattva qualities will go along the path of salvation. But I, the sinner, will fall into the terrible hell."

15. O leading king, when the sword was lifted up by the king, Mohinī endowed with delusion over-came with swoon fell on the ground.

16-18. Shining with that sword, the king attempted to cut off the neck of his son Dharmāṅgada. When the courageous king Rukmāṅgada, with great delight, was to cut off his son's head alongwith the ear-rings the head that was beautiful, had the brilliance of the moon that was shining. But immediately the king was caught in his hand by Viṣṇu, the lord of the daughter of the Milk-ocean". I am pleased I am delighted. There is no doubt about this. O lord of the people, go to my region.

19-20. O king, establish on the Earth your fame that is worthy of being worshipped in the three worlds and that is white and pure. Set your foot on the head of Yama. O king, thereafter, accompanied by your beloved wife and son you go to my residence called after my body (i.e. Vaikuṇṭha)". The moment he was touched with the hand of the discus-bearing lord, the king became free from sins in the company of his wife and his son.

21-22. Approaching quickly, the noble-souled king entered the divine body of the lord, leaving off the Royal glory originating from the Earth abandoning the slaves, riches and treasury, elephants, horses, chariots, wives in the harem and the kinsmen. He became one with the body of Viṣṇu. Then a shower of flowers fell from the sky.

23. O king (Māndhātā), the large drums called Dundubhis were sounded by the delighted Siddhas, and the guardians of the divine world. The celestial ladies sang sweet songs and danced joyously.

24-26. The daughters of the Gandharvas were satisfied with the action of the king. The son of the sun (i.e Yama) too observed this wonderful phenomenon viz. the king entered the divine body of Viṣṇu accompanied by his wife and son after wiping off the writings of Yama. He placed all the people in the path leading to the world of Hari. The people followed the path pointed out by the king and were grateful to him. Yama became frightened again. He came to the four-faced lord Brahmā and spoke to him crying :- "O lord, I will not be a mere employee without the power to command. O lord of Devas, create another post for me. I shall do my best. Let not my baton of punishment be a thing of mere show."

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Mohini incurs a cause

Yama said :

1. "O lord of the Devas; O lord of the universe ! O lord and preceptor of the mobile and immobile beings Mohinī has become unsuccessful like a barren woman in the matter of giving birth (to childern).

2. O Kuśa-emblemed one the entire world goes to Vaikuṇṭha along the path advocated by Rukmāṅgada. No one comes to me.

3. Although the lord of kings entered the body of the discus-bearing lord (Viṣṇu), the mind of all the living beings has not changed.

4. O grand-sire of the universe, after observing fast on the day of Viṣṇu, all men including young children, go to the greatest world with their sins dispelled.

5. Your daughter, Mohinī, the gentle lady is ashamed and has been in swoon. She is not coming near you because she is despised by the world. She does not even take food.

6. I have become jobless, what am I to do? Guide me." On hearing the words of Yama the lotus-seated deity said :

7-8A "We all shall go together to bring Mohinī to consciousness. After she has got up (regained normalcy) O son of the sun, we shall perform your task. There is no doubt about it. May excitement and agitation be eschewed.

8B-9. Then all the groups of Devas led by Indra and others accompanied by Brahmā, came down to the Earth in their aerial chariots as refulgent as the sun, in order to rouse that woman to consciousness O king (Māndhātā).

10-23. With their aerial chariots they surrounded the auspicious (beautiful)-faced lady (who was in a swoon then). She was devoid of brilliance and bliss. She resembled (the following) : a river the water of which had dried up, the night without the moon, a holy rite without the Ṛtvik priest, a man who is defeated in a battle, a flower that has faded, the dais where-from the celebration of the festival has ceased, the coral that has become white and colourless, the grain-field from-where the grains have been removed, the light that is dim, the churning rod O king, when the butter is taken out,* the speech that is not refined, the army that has been crushed (severely defeated), a young woman whose husband has been killed, the subjects deprived of food grains, the sacred-rite without Mantras, the war waged in violation of its prescribed code and without mercy, the Earth without a king, the king without a minister, O excellent king, the house devoid of wealth and food-grains, the pot without water, the lordly bull stuck in mire, the householder without his wife, the king banished from his kingdom; the physician whose medical treatment has failed, the tree whose branches have been cut, the house without fire, the cloud without water, the fire with plenty of smoke, the sun without his rays, the man who has gone out of his senses, the man who indulges in sexual intercourse on Parvan

*Here the text is defective.

days (the new moon, the full moon days etc), a lover who is not satisfied with his beloved, (or with no favourable response from his beloved), the serpent deprived of its poison, the bird whose wings have been clipped, the Brāhmaṇa who has no means of sustenance; the garland that has been dropped down from the head, the mountain without metals and minerals, the scriptural text the script of which is distorted, the Ṛk and Yajus Mantra that is recited in wrong notes, the Sāman verse recited with a discordant note, a lake devoid of lotuses, the pathway overgrown with grasses, the lotus devoid of petals, knowledge (vitiated) by the feelings of egotism, the Puruṣa without Prakṛti, the Sāṅkhya philosophy minus the Tattvas (principles), and the Dharma (Virtue, piety) (tarnished) with arrogance, thus the heaven-dwellers saw Mohinī devoid of brilliance.

24-25. The Devas, on arrival, spoke to that fiercc lady who was meditating (brooding) and lacking in enthusiasm; who was viewed by the people as one with (the stigma of) the murder of her son; who was criticised in cruel rebuking terms as a woman of bad conduct; who had been abandoned by the virtuous people; who had been stubborn in clinging to her own words and had been defrauded by those very words (?)

26. "O fair lady, do not feel aggrieved; you have put in manly efforts. Indeed, there is no question of wounded prestige in regard to the devotees of Viṣṇu.

27. O fawn-eyed lady, it is for the fulfilment of the work of the Devas that you have come (here). O fair lady, that is not fulfilled, now that he (king Rukmāṅgada) has attained absence of birth (i.e. salvation).

28-29. (Defective) O Mohinī, the Ekādaśī in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha has been previously observed by Rukmāṅgada (as a day of fast). It destroys all obstacles, and it is highly meritorious. O lady of large eyes, he observed the rite continuously for a year with very great strain. The fact that he did not swerve from truth is an act without a parallel.

30-31. A woman is described as the queen of obstacles (except in your case). The king decided on killing his son without reservation in mind, thought or speech. He

cast off his affection and lifted his sword. The lord Viṣṇu observed that (the king's steadfastness had been proved) on that touch-stone.

32-33. For he was prepared to kill his son but he would not take food on the day of Hari. Hari (Viṣṇu) saw the real feelings of the king, his wife and his son. He was extremely pleased (with them) and so all the three were taken to his own abode along with their physical bodies like coals deposited (ignited) with fire, as their Karmans were exhausted.

34. O blessed and gentle lady, if the work is begun in earnest and performed assiduously but the fruit is not derived, what is your fault in it now ?

35. For this reason, O splendid lady, Devas have come as granters of boon. Whether it fructifies or not, one should engage oneself in an activity. One must not remain idle.

36-38. All his attendants must be properly maintained by a king, who wishes for piety. If, even after an honest effort, the servant is not able to accomplish the task, at least the remuneration must be paid. There may not be any gratuity. If a man (i.e. the master) does not give the (servant) living sustenance, he attains the sin of a cow-slaughter. There is no doubt about this. Hence, O fair lady, O excellently beautiful woman, what is desired by you must be given.

39-40A. (Defective) the task of heaven-dwellers had been to create the obstacle. Since you have endeavoured with sincerity what is it that the Devas will not do. But O fair-faced lady, along with you, they toó have been frustrated by the brilliance of fast which they call the destroyer of obstacles."

40B-41. On being told thus by the Devas, Mohinī the enchantress of the worlds, who was bereft of her husband and so was cheerless and extremely distressed, spoke thus :- "Fie upon this life of mine, inasmuch as the entrusted work was not achieved.

42-43. O lords of the immortal beings, the path of the world of Yama has not been rendered thronging with people. The vow of the day of Hari was not violated. Food was not taken by that king. His own son was executed by that hero

joyously. After placing his foot on my head, Rukmāṅgada has attained Viṣṇu.

44-47. He has attained Viṣṇu of immeasurable attributes, who is free from impurities, who is the support of pure ones, who is called Haṁsa, Śucipāda (of pure region), Vyoman (firmament), Praṇava (OM) the imperishable seed; who is formless, without any appearances; transcendental to the universe; perfectly pure and unsullied and of the nature of void (firmament), who is worthy of being meditated upon; who is beyond contemplation; whom they call both the Existent and the non-existent, who is neither far off nor close by; who is the great splendour and capable of being grasped only by the mind; who is identical with the universe and is called Puruṣa; who is abiding in the lotus of the heart; who is the embodiment of splendour and eternal. When the king has already dissolved himself in the lord, what benefit do I derive from life ?

48. The man who accepts his salary when the (appointed) work is not accomplished, goes definitely to the hell leaving off his master.

49. O heaven-dwellers, the servants who do not accomplish the tasks of their masters but still enjoy the salary, are reborn in the Earth as horses.

50. I am the destroyer of my husband as well as of my son. I am not successful in accomplishing the task. How can I accept the boon from you, the dwellers of Heaven ?"

The Devas promised :

51. "Speak out, O Mohinī, I [we] shall give what is desired by you in your heart of hearts. After helping you, we shall free ourselves from indebtedness to you.

52. O gentle lady, endeavour has been made by you in motivating the king to take food. O gentle lady, when such task has been accomplished, you deserve a share in the benefit."

53. O king (Māndhātā) ! When the Devas were speaking thus, the priest of the king (Rukmāṅgada) resplendent like fire, arrived there.

54. The sage who had been engaged in Prāṇāyāma, had been living under water. When the twelve-year-period of

this penance was completed, he came out of the water.

55. O king (Māndhātā), as soon as he came out of water, the actions of Mohinī were heard by him. The infuriated prominent sage approached that group of the Devas.

56. He condemned all those Devas who were about to grant boons to Mohinī. "Fie upon this (woman) ? Fie upon this group of Devas ! Fie upon this action that should be called a sin.

57. The boon that is desired by Mohinī and that you are about to give her is detrimental to your very existence (or feeling of devotion about you) and promotes that growth of Puruṣārtha * (Kāma ?).

58. She who has killed the son of her husband (and her husband as well) is no better than one who has killed ten thousand persons. She is like a man-eating ogress of the meanst conduct (?). O Devas, even by immolating herself into a well-kindled fire, she cannot gain in purity.

59. These three have been considered equal to one-another by the ancient excellent Brāhmaṇas, Viz. Killing ten thousand persons; slaughter of the husband, and the slaughter committed without any purpose. O Devas, even by falling into a well-kindled fire, she cannot purify herself. She had with her nectar-like sweet words deluded Rukmāṅgada, and Dharmāṅgada. Rukmāṅgada killed his son and attained salvation accompanied by his beloved wife. She (Mohinī) has made the Earth bereft of its rulers, the protectors of men.

60. She cannot have her residence even in the hells, O Devas. How can she, who is intellectually deficient (and perverse) stay in heaven ? O Devas, nor can she stay near the king; she may not attain the eternal region of Viṣṇu.

61. Nowhere in the worlds can she have her residence since she has been defiled (and condemned) by the public

*The text *puruṣārtha-prarohakaṁ* is obscure as *pra-rohaka* means 'causing to grow' (MW. p. 689). How could the boon to Mohinī promote the germination of any Puruṣārtha except Kāma ?

censure. Fie upon the life of this lady of despicable activities who was always indulging in sinful actions, O Devas.

62. After killing her husband, after taking away the life of her son, after murdering her co-wife who was just like a mother unto her and after destroying the entire Earth, O Devas, what sort of existence or fate will she attain ?

63-64A. (Defective) O Devas, this lady is a greater sinner (than others). She has destroyed the holy observances of Hari. She always advocated "May food be taken on the day of Hari." Downfall is suffered even by those who take food (to relish it and not) for the sustenance of life. (?)

64B-65. How can one get residence in heaven by propagating "May food be eaten on the Ekādaśī day. May a cow be killed along with Brāhmaṇas. May undrinkable liquors be drunk". Such is spoken by the ignorant. This is not the decision of the learned.

66. If out of ignorance the statement viż :— "May the food be taken on the day of Hari" is made, there is an expiation for it with a hundred Prāṇāyāmas.

67-68A. O heaven-dwellers, they can atone for it by observing fast on the Ekādaśī day, or by taking a bath in the lake Puṣkara when the star under which one is born is associated with it (?), or by touching the Deity (Viṣṇu) in the Boar form or by the worship of God.

68B-69A. This expiation has been recounted by the Brāhmaṇas if the words are uttered (as mentioned before). This lady was ruthlessly engaged in sin. She insisted on food being taken on the day of Viṣṇu which is difficult of performance to sinners.

69B-70. She did not pay heed to the words of her husband. She got the favourite son killed—the son who knew the fitting words, who abided by the advice (of elders) and who was engaged in activities beneficial to his mothers. This woman has violated the Dharma of Viṣṇu. She is burdened with many sins.

71. O lords of the Devas, she is not worthy of even being touched. How then can you bestow boons on her ? Indeed your excellencies are interested in persons endowed with the qualities of justice and piety.

72. Heaven-dwellers do not accord protection to sinners. Devas are remembered as the supporters of Virtue. And Virtue (Dharma) is enshrined in the Vedas.

73. Service unto the husband is glorified as the duty of woman by the Vedas. Whatever the husband says must be carried out unhesitatingly by her.

74. If the husband says that anything is white she must also say that it is white. If he says that it is black, she must also say that it is black. This is to be known as real Śuśrūṣā (service) and mere menial action of attendance is not Śuśrūṣā.

75-77. O Devas, her husband's orders were disobeyed by her with a view of her desire to establish her own command. Hence there is no doubt that Mohinī is the most sinful of all women. In order to achieve truthfulness, the king, who had been restrained by imprecations, said different kinds of words (i.e. offered various proposals). But this lady, the murdress of her son, did not like them. Hence the king relegated the sins to her and attained salvation. Thus she is indeed a woman of sinful physical body responsible for ten thousand murders.

78-83. This woman of evil activities had repudiated the king who was the donor of various charitable gifts; who was a patron of Brāhmaṇas; whose deity was Hari; who invariably delighted his subjects; who regularly observed fasts on the days of Hari; who cherished no indecent Love towards the wives of others; who had no desire for worldly pleasures; who eschewed his passionate love for the sake of others; who always performed sacrifices; who continuously maintained the suppression of the wicked ones on the Earth, and who was never overwhelmed by the seven terrible vices. How can she be worthy of being granted the boons ? O excellent Devas within a trice I shall reduce to ashes the person who is likely to side with her, whether he is a Deva or Dānava. O gods, if anyone endeavours to protect Mohinī, he incurs that sin which is fixed in Mohinī."

84. O king (Māndhātā), after saying this and taking up water in his hand, the eminent Brāhmaṇa furiously looked at the daughter of Brahmā and violently hurled it on her head. The water then shone like fire.

85. O king, no sooner was the water cast on her, her body blazed like a bundle of straw licked up by the flames of fire, even as the residents of heaven were (helplessly) looking on.

86. "O Lord, check your anger; check your anger," even as these words of the Devas rose up in the sky, that (violent) fire created by the utterance of the Brāhmaṇa reduced that young woman to ashes.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Brahmā intercedes for Mohinī

Vasiṣṭha continued:

1. Recovering herself from her unconscious senseless condition, Mohinī went to the mansions of the Devas, (the Heaven). She was then rebuked by the messenger of the Devas, "You are a sinning woman and you have no place here.

2. O foolish woman, a habitual sinner, O woman indulging in censuring your own husband, you have no place for staying in the heaven, since you have violated the day of Hari (the Ekādaśī Vrata).

3-5. It is in the hell that the residence of those averse to Dharma is recommended." Vāyu said thus to her in cruel and unexpected words. Beating her with a baton, he pushed her to (the place of) torture. O king, beaten thus by the celestial messenger and completely over-powered by the Brahmadaṇḍa (the baton i.e. curse of a Brāhmaṇa), Mohinī reached the hell. There, at the behest of Dharma (i.e. Yama), she was beaten by the messengers for a long time.

6-7A. She was taken to hells in the order and made to fall therein. They rebuked her, "O sinful woman, your son Dharmāṅgada had been killed by you through the hands of your husband. Hence experience here the evil effects of the sinful actions perpetrated by you.

7B-8A. You are the experiencer of such fruit as this, inasmuch as you have brought about the death of your son who was a benefactor of the subjects, whose intellect was stable and firm, who was comparable to Mahendra and Varuṇa and who was the overlord of seven continents.

8B-9A. If one violently injures even an uncultured son, one becomes the murderer of a Brāhmaṇa. What then, O sinful woman, if one injures a son like Dharmāṅgada endowed with all piety ?"

9B-10A. O excellent king, she was thus expostulated by the messengers of lord Yama. She experienced one by one all the tortures suggested by that lord.

10B-11. Since she had already been struck down by Brahmadaṇḍa (the curse of a Brāhmaṇa), the tortures (or the hells) themselves became scorched due to their contact with her. They became unable to detain her (within themselves). Then, O king, those hells approached Dharmarāja.

12. They were afflicted due to the contact with her limbs. They were frightened. With palms joined in reverence, they said, "O Lord of the Devas, O Lord of the universe, O Dharmarāja, be merciful.

13. Take away this lady from the place of tortures immediately for the sake of our relief. O lord, at her very touch, we are being instantaneously reduced to ashes.

14. Hence banish her from all hells." On hearing their words, Dharmarāja was mnch surprised.

15-16A. Dharmarāja then commanded his messengers, "This woman is to be banished from my mansion. Tortures (in my hell) do not wish to have any contact with that sinner who is burned by a Brāhmaṇa's imprecation, whether such a sinner is a man or a woman or even a thief (?)

16B. Hence banish from here this excessively sinning woman, who had disobeyed her husband's words, who had caused the death of her son; who has destroyed Dharma and who is already struck by Brahmadaṇḍa. Even my body burns at her sight".

17-18. O king, thus commanded by Dharmarāja, those emissaries struck her with weapons and missiles and threw her out of Yama's abode.

19. Thereafter, O king, the distressed woman of delusion, Mohinī went to the nether-worlds. She was prevented (from entering the region) by the people there.

20. Extremely ashamed due to this, Mohinī, the daughter of Brahmā, went to her father's presence and intimated her own grief to him.

21. "O father, there is no place of rest for me in all the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings. Wherever I go they throw me out after rebuking me.

22. I have been banished by the people of the world who struck me hard with weapons. It was at your behest that I had gone to Rukmāṅgada at the outset.

23-24A. (For the same reason) this sinful activity was indulged in by me though that course of action was despicable to the entire world. I had caused distress to my husband; I had got my son killed with sword; I had made Sandhyāvalī perturbed. Hence, O father, I am reduced to this plight.

24B-25A. O lord, there is no redemption at all now, for me who am the sinner. Particularly due to the curse of the Brāhmaṇa I have had to experience the misery.

25B-26. O father, the celestial river (Gaṅgā) is the bestower of liberation to those who have been struck down by the imprecation of a Brāhmaṇa, to those who have been burnt by fire, to those who are killed by a Cāṇḍāla, to those who are eaten by animals etc. and to those who have been struck dead by lightning.

27. If out of love for me, you, accompanied by gods, can propitiate and persuade the Brāhmaṇa who had cursed me, then alone any better state of existence can be brought about."

28-29. O king, when she said thus, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, started from there accompanied by Śiva Indra, Dharma, Sun, Fire, and other lords of Devas, and sages. With Mohinī at the head (of deputation) he went to the presence of the Brāhmaṇa.

29B-30. After going there, O king, god Brahmā, surrounded by gods, paid obeisance to the Brāhmaṇa with great dignity,

even though it is true that god Brahmā, the creator (of the universe), is the grandsire of the world and is worthy of respect and worship by all gods of whom Rudra was prominent.

31A-32A It was out of his affection for Mohinī (and for her consolation and pleasure) that god Brahmā got perplexed and presented his solution. O king, when a great work is at hand and if it is impossible to get it accomplished in the three worlds, the obeisance offered to a younger person is not censured.

32B-33. On seeing the creator of all the worlds arrived there alongwith the Devas, that Brāhmaṇa who was a master of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas and who was absorbed in performing austerities, got up and bowed down to god Brahmā, those sages and the Devas.

34. With great devotion, he made all of them sit and eulogised the lotus-born deity. Then the lord and creator of the worlds, the preceptor of the universe became delighted.

35. 36A On behalf of Mohinī, they requested the Brāhmaṇa who had been honoured by the king before. "O dear one, O Brāhmaṇa of good conduct, O helper of the other world, O Ocean of mercy, please show some compassion. Be the bestower of salvation on Mohinī.

36B-38. O Brāhmaṇa, it was for deluding Rukmāṅgada that she had been deputed by me. She is my daughter. O bestower of honour, on seeing the world of Yama empty and Vaikuṇṭha full of unperturbed people this gentle lady, the benefactress of the Devas, was mentally created by me. O Brāhmaṇa, listen to what I am explaining to you.

39-40. The way of Dharma is very subtle. It brings about the welfare of the entire world. I had tested Rukmāṅgada through this lady who acted as the touch-stone. Thus along with his wife and the son, O Brāhmaṇa, he was enabled to attain Hari's abode through the unflinching and unobstructable devotion and the observance of fast on the day of Hari.

41-42. Yama's abode was made empty by the activity of wiping off the lines in the record of Citragupta—Yama's accountant of human deeds. O Brāhmaṇa sage, it is not proper on the part of a Kṣatriya to be critical and antagonistic to the

Devas. Particularly to the Brāhmaṇa they render great assistance.

43. It (the place in Vaikuṇṭha) is attained neither by the knower of Sāṁkhya, nor through the Yoga system consisting of eightfold paths. It is to be attained only through devotion. O Brāhmaṇa, the husband who was the king (Rukmāṅgada), the son (Dharmāṅgada) and the cowife (Sandhyāvatī) were enabled to reach it.

44. What she had done against the crestjewel of a king who was extremely meritorious was a sin by which she was cursed and reduced to ashes by your imprecations.

45. This woman strove for the Devas, for the increase of worldly existence and for rendering help to the king. She is not selfish. O Brāhmaṇa, how can she incur disrespect ? If at all there is any disservice on her part, kindly forgive it.

46. Be merciful, resort to tranquillity and quiescence, the grinding of the pounded flour (i.e. superflous exertion) is not justifiable. This woman was struck down by your cursing her. Be pleased. Be the bestower of salvation. O Brāhmaṇa, if this is performed, this Mohinī will eschew her cruel grudge against you, who are worthy of being worshipped."

47. On being urged thus by the lotus-seated deity, he (the Brāhmaṇa) thought intelligently and abandoned his anger. Then the leading Brāhmaṇa said to the lord of the Devas (Brahmā) who created the body of Mohinī.

48. "O lord, inasmuch as your daughter Mohinī is burdened with so many sins, she has no place in this world teeming with living beings.

49. "It is out of my affection for you that I shall state before you what has been thought of by me after much critical deliberation in the case of Mohinī, and you are certainly worthy of respectful worship by me all the more.

50-53A O lord of Devas, I shall see that your words turn out to be true as well as those of mine. The affairs of the Devas and duties of Mohinī must go on. Hence let Mohinī stay in such a spot as has not been occupied by any

living being. The Earth consisting of seven continents is inhabited fully by the mobile and immobile beings for ever. The nether-worlds are occupied by the Daityas and others. The firmament has been occupied by the birds etc., heaven is occupied by the meritorious beings. Hells are teeming with persons of sinful actions. The oceans have been full of the fish and other animals. Hence it is not possible for this woman to stay in these, as she is not worthy of being touched.

53B-54A Then, O exceellent king, Brahmā took counsel with the Devas and spoke to Mohinī. "Gentle lady there is no space anywhere for you".

45B-58. On hearing the words of her father Mohinī, the obedient lady who wanted to destroy the observance of the day of Hari bowed down to all and said :- "O leading Devas, I hereby join my palms in reverence to you all including the priest, and to the Devas who are the witness of the worlds. O Devas, with delighted heart, thanks to the hundred obeisances, what has been requested for should be granted to me. It is conducive to the pleasure of everyone. Salvation of all the sinners is achieved through the power of Ekādaśī. My purpose is to increase it further. I have enabled my husband, co-wife and the son to go to Vaikuṇṭha.

59-60. I shall stay behind in the world of Earth, the widow that I am. I shall stay there for your sake, so that, O bestowers of honour, the day of Hari associated with me may not become defiled. For the sake of gaining my own selfish end I request for this. Not otherwise. Kindly grant it."

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Mohinī regains her physical body

Mohinī said :

1-2A. "O Devas, there cannot be anything else so sanctifying as the Ekādaśī (Vrata). Even great sinners go to the abode of Hari, on being sanctified by it. It seems to me proper to have my abode in its vicinity. Let this proposal be considered."

Devas said :

2B-3.[1] O Mohinī, the Vedha (overlapping of the previous Tithi) at mid-night or at the Sunrise is conducive to the help of the Devas as ordained by Hari. The breaking of the fast on the Trayodaśī day is destructive of the benefit of the fast.

4. The eight days, remembered in the Āgamas (Scriptures), of the devotees of Viṣṇu as 'Mahādvādaśīs' are those days wherein Ekādaśi is also present. They are observed as the days of fast by the devotees of Viṣṇu.

5. This observance of Ekādaśī is different in regard to the noble souls, the followers of Viṣṇu. In both the fortnights, it is observed alike for three days together.

6. In the evening of the previous (i.e. Daśamī) day and in the morning of the following (i.e. Dvādaśī) day meal is missed. (Of course, both the meals are eschewed in the middle day i.e. Ekādaśī day). But if Ekādaśī is overlapped (by the previous Tithi), the observance of full fast is on the next day. The holy rite, in that case, should be performed on the Dvādaśī

1. VV. 2B-18 discuss the proper *Tithi* for observance of Ekādaśi. This topic has been treated in detail in the *Pūrvārdha* of the NP. Shorn of mythological paddings, it means that an Ekādaśī when affected by *Aruṇodaya-Vedha* should not be observed i.e. if the 10th *Tithi*, *Daśamī*, extends on a civil day beyond 56 *ghaṭikās* from sunrise and Ekādaśi follows and continues for the whole of the next day, there is *Aruṇodaya-Vedha* and such affected or penetrated (*viddhā*) Ekādaśi is not to be observed. This period of two *muhūrtas* before the sunrise (i.e. *Aruṇodaya Vedha*) is assigned to Mohinī for occupation and the merit of people observing Aruṇodaya-Viddhā Ekādaśī goes to Mohinī. (vv. 8-18 also V. 22).

The *Smārtas* (non-Vaiṣṇavas) however, are not governed by the doctrine of *Aruṇodaya-Vedha.*

day by fasting and even by eschewing water.

7. Those who are physically incapable of observing full fast can take water, vegetables, fruits, milk or the Naivedya offerings of Hari. In any case the quantity must not exceed a fourth of the usual diet.

8. O chaste lady, the Smārtas (those who follow Smṛtis) eschew the Ekādaśī that is overlapped (by Daśamī) at sunrise. Those who are devoid of any desire (from this Vrata) leave off (the Ekādaśī) that is overlapped by Daśamī even at midnight.

9. It is wellknown in all the worlds that the Daśamī Tithī belongs to Yama. O sinless lady, you must station yourself in its vicinity on the border.

10. O splendid lady, thanks to this, even the task of the Devas can be realised. Staying along the border of Daśamī, you will traverse along with the Sun and the Moon too.

11. In order to dispel your sins, you move about the various sacred places on the Earth. You can have the benefit of the rite of Ekādaśī within the period of time between Aruṇodaya (dawn) and sunrise.

12. If any one observes the holy rite of Ekādaśī on the day when it has been occupied by you, he will be the person assisting you, O beloved one of the Devas. The period of two Muhūrtas of the dawn should be known (as your period of occupancy).

13-14. The number of Muhūrtas of the day and of the night are remembered to be fifteen for each. They vary when the extent of time of the day and the night varies becoming short and long (by turns). This extent of time should be understood by the process of Trairāśika (Rule of Three).

15. You come (and occupy your place) after the thirteenth Muhūrta of the night. O lady of pure smiles, deriving the merit of those who observe fast on that day, be happy.

16-17 O Mohinī, the time marked by the early dawn has been assigned as the abode to you for the purpose of re-establishing Yama, to destroy the path to Vaikuṇṭha, to increase the number of heretics and to accumulate sins.

18. O splendid lady, enjoy the benefit of the merit of those persons who assiduously observe the holy rite of Ekādaśī on the day of your occupancy and overlapping. Be gracious unto this Brāhmaṇa (?)

19. Thus advised and guided by the lotus-seated deity (Brahmā) and others, Mohinī became much more delighted. She considered her life contented and blessed by the opportunity to resort to holy centers for wiping off her sins.

20. "Although my body had been reduced to ashes, this task of the Devas has been achieved. Although the body is reduced to a mere mass of ashes and consciousness of aerial nature (Liṅga-Śarīra) remains, the path made by the king is swept clean.

21. What has been stated by me when I was delighted has been carried out by myself." After thinking thus, the delighted lady bowed down to the Devas, who protected the earth as well as the priest.

22. For the delusion of the people, she stationed herself in the transition period of time of Daśamī (that is called Sūrya-vihīnā (devoid of the Sun or Aruṇodaya Vedha). She enjoys the whole day (?) in the form of Kṛcchrānta for the downfall into hell of men (?)

23-24. On seeing her staioned on the border (of his Daśamī Tithi) the son of Sun (Yama) became delighted as (was) evident from his face. He spoke these words :- "O lady of beautiful eyes, my re-establishment here, in this world, has been properly made by you. The sound of the drum placed on an elephant belonging to Rukmāṅgada has been silenced. (i.e. no longer do they announce the necessity of observing fast as before). Now all people place their faith only in the affairs they see.

25. If Daśamī touches Ekādaśi at the time of Sunrise what is called Sūryodaya Vedha it is always condemned. The sunrise that is not touched will be conducive to the fascination of men.

26-27. (Defective) That Daśamī day must be eschewed even if it extends to a fourth of the period and is also invisible (?) if enjoyment of the favourable Yoga is desired (?) O large-eyed lady, your name Mohinī, as people call you, is

significant indeed. After deluding the people you get them recorded on the canvas (i.e. the record of their acts kept by Citragupta.)"

28A. After saying this, the son of Vivasvat (i.e. god Yama) bowed to the daughter of Brahmā. Delightfully, he went to the heavenly world along with the Devas holding his scribe, Citragupta by the hand.

28B-29. After the Devas had departed, Mohinī approached Brahmā, the lord of Devas and Asuras, and entreated him thus : O father, this priest is fiercely angry with me, O lord of the worlds, my body has been burnt by him. Do something whereby I shall regain my physical body.

30. By stationing myself on the border of Yama's Tithi, the universe has been deluded by me. O dear father, thanks to your power, Yama who had been formerly conquered by the king is now made victorious.

31. O dear father, now it is your duty that I should become one who am embodied. O lord of the universe, appease the Brāhmaṇa."

32. On hearing those words of Mohinī, god Brahmā the ordainer of the worlds, mollified the Brāhmaṇa once again for the sake of his daughter.

33. "O deer one, O Vasu, understand this that I speak which is beneficial to this lady. O blessed one, this is conducive to the benefit of all the worlds.

34. Out of anger, this Mohinī was reduced to ashes by you. She requests you for the restoration of her physical body once again. O bestower of honour, give commands for the same.

35. She is my daughter and your Yājyā (one on whose behalf you must perform Yajñas). O dear one, she has attained misfortune. This pitiable lady who has accomplished her task (assigned to her by me) must be protected by you.

36. O bestower of honour if with pure feelings you inform me, I shall, thereupon create her physical body again.

37. But she became a sinner inasmuch as she was antagonistic to Viṣṇu's day. O leading Brāhmaṇa may something be done immediately so that she is sanctified."

38. On hearing god Brahmā's words of request, the sacrificial priest (of Mohinī's family) delightfully passed orders for reunion of the physical body (after its creation) with (the jīva) of his Yājyā.

39. On hearing the words of the Brāhmaṇa, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, sprinkled water from his waterpot on the ashes of the body of Mohinī.

40. When the ashes were sprinkled with water by Brahmā, the maker of the worlds, Mohinī was endowed with a physical body. After bowing down to her father, she humbly bowed down to Vasu, the priest and grasped his feet.

41. Then Vasu, the Yājaka (priest) of the king, became joyous. He spoke these words to (Mohinī) who was the wife of his Yājya (one on whose behalf he had to perform a Yajña), whose prowess was wellknown and who had been abandoned by her husband and son.

42. Vasu said:- "O gentle lady, anger has been abandoned by me at the instance of Brahmā. I shall facilitate your salvation by means of such rites as visiting holy centres and taking holy dips".

43. After saying this to Mohinī, the Brāhmaṇa joyously bowed down to Brahmā, the lord of the worlds, and the father of Mohinī, and bade goodbye to him.

44. Bidden farewell by Mohinī and Vasu out of affection Brahmā went to the world beyond darkness through the unmanifest path.

45-46. Vasu the excellent Brāhmaṇa who was the priest of Rukmāṅgada considered Mohinī worthy of being blessed and pondered. After meditating for a Muhūrta he understood the way to her salvation.[1]

1. This chapter serves as a background for the *Tīrtha-Yātrā* (Pilgrimage to holy places) section that follows.